

The Asheville Riverfront Open Space Design Guidelines



Asheville, North Carolina



Richmond Hill after renovation - 1983

**Chronology of
Richmond Pearson,
Richmond Hill, and the
French Broad River
•
1852-1989**



Richmond Hill before renovation - 1983



Moving the mansion 600 feet to the east in 1984

See inside backcover for complete chronology of Richmond Hill and Richmond Pearson.

The Asheville Riverfront Open Space Design Guidelines

**Asheville Riverfront Public Open Space Charette
September 5 - 7, 1991**



*“We have only been stewards of this mountain
landscape for a short time. We must ensure
this special heritage is conserved
for generations to follow.”*

— Gary Meisner, Charette Facilitator

*“The French Broad River corridor is already a multi-use
corridor, but it lacks the human/pedestrian element. Existing
transportation patterns aren’t going to go away — we just
want to incorporate one more, the human scale.”*

— Luther Smith, Charette Chairman

The North Carolina Arts Council supports the design arts by providing funds for model projects to communities and nonprofit organizations. The design arts include the professional disciplines of architecture, landscape architecture, and planning, as well as graphic, product, and interior design. The purpose of the design arts program is to encourage exemplary design, to improve the quality of design in North Carolina communities, and to promote collaboration among design professionals. Funded projects should expand the public awareness of one or more design discipline and provide for the public a greater understanding of the value, processes, and products of good design.

The collaborative process that led to this publication has been funded in part by a design initiative grant and documents a three-day working charette, which brought together the expertise and vision of artists, architects, landscape architects, planners, as well as graphic and product designers. It is our hope that this publication will create a dialogue about design process with the Asheville community and bring about a greater understanding of the value of the design arts to the natural and built environment.

*Deborah Eagle
Design Arts Coordinator
North Carolina Arts Council*



Deborah Eagle (right) talks with charette team member Jan Brooks Loyd. Photo: Weststar Photographic Services.

“In order for Asheville to realize its dream for an integrated, economically viable and continuous riverfront greenway, local residents will need to have the political will and progressive foresight to carry out essential land use changes prescribed by The Riverfront Plan.”

— Chuck Flink

“It may be because we enjoy a most remarkable setting with the Blue Ridge and Smoky Mountains as a backdrop to our daily living that we have not brought as much of the mountain landscape into the city for the pleasure of the urban dweller.”

— Jane Gianvito Mathews

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Schedule of Events

Thursday, September 5, 1991

6:00-8:00 pm: Cocktail party to introduce Charette Team, exhibit historic photographs of riverfront areas and drawings from 1989 Asheville Riverfront Charette. A "citizen's vote" was also conducted, to measure public interest in different aspects of greenway design — including safety, environmental concerns, flood proofing, wildlife protection, beauty, and maintenance.

8:00 pm: Team dinner.

Friday, September 6, 1991

8:00 am: Welcome remarks by Luther Smith, Charette Chairman, at RiverLink office.

8:15 am: Slide presentation, "Greenways of the World," by Chuck Flink.

8:45 am: Video presentation — helicopter view of French Broad River corridor.

9:15 am: Slide presentation of French Broad River corridor, including linkage points, historic buildings, current usages, etc., by Karen Cragnolin, RiverLink Executive Director.

10:00 am: History and folklore of the river and surrounding community, by Betty Lawrence.

11:00 am: Tour of French Broad and Swannanoa Rivers and picnic lunch along riverfront on Biltmore Estate.

2:00 pm: Team briefing and first work session to broadstroke charette goals.

3:00 pm: Team focus on prioritized items in need of design standards and description of standards.

6:00 pm: Dinner delivered to RiverLink office.

7:00 pm: Second work session.

Saturday, September 7, 1991

8:00 am: Third work session — review of previous day's work.

12:00 pm: Lunch delivered to RiverLink office.

1:00 pm: Fourth work session — recap previous work, fill in gaps, prepare executive summary for press conference.

5:00 pm: Press conference to announce charette results and exhibit charette graphics.

8:00 pm: Team farewell dinner at Magnolia's Raw Bar & Grill.

At 3:00 a.m. on Saturday, April 29, 1989, several participants in the first Asheville Riverfront Charette were still putting the finishing touches on drawings, preparing them for the public presentation of team recommendations at 11:00 a.m. later that morning. After several days of site review, public hearings, and design collaboration, the charette team presented a distilled plan for long-term revitalization of a 6-mile portion of the French Broad urban riverfront. The publication that resulted from the charette, *The Riverfront Plan*, gives the historical basis for the French Broad Riverfront Planning Committee's decision to sponsor the charette and details the charette team's recommendations and suggestions for implementation.

While the charette itself was a flurry of activity, it paled in comparison to the energetic storm that followed. According to *The Riverfront Plan*, "One immediate action recognized as necessary by the Riverfront Planning Committee is to establish a citizen committee comprised of representatives of all the special interest groups, implementation agencies, and appropriate commissions to share knowledge and coordinate actions toward realization of this plan."

Not a moment was wasted — during the two years since the 1989 charette, much has been done to bring *The Riverfront Plan*'s recommendations to fruition. A powerful symbol of these productive efforts was the groundbreaking ceremony on September 15, 1991, of the first section of riverfront greenway for Asheville. Citizen response, spearheaded by RiverLink, Inc.

(formerly the French Broad Riverfront Planning Committee), has been focused on specific recommendations of *The Riverfront Plan*. The public hearings conducted by RiverLink during the 1989 charette brought interested citizens out to speak about their visions for the riverfront. These same citizens and groups were utilized to spearhead the creation of task forces focused on a variety of issues — bike paths, jogging trails, soccer fields, railway museum, greenway connections with city and county, water sports, and more. And the sponsoring organization, RiverLink, has always been there — providing leadership, participation, and a place for the committees to meet.

The individual steps taken to make *The Riverfront Plan* a reality have been incremental, but together they have made an overall picture impressive in its dedication and productive energy. It's obvious that the

initial planning stage is complete, the time for action has begun. The second design charette is a natural step in the transition from planning to acting — the intermediate step that tailors the overall vision to accommodate the individual elements of the riverfront project. When land is designated for a riverfront greenway, how shall it be developed? What kinds of facilities should it have? Should there be benches and how should they look? If it is to be lighted at night, what should the lighting look like and how should it be designed to maximize energy efficiency and minimize maintenance? How should connections to existing traffic routes be achieved? How natural and how manmade should it be? How do the cultural and historic features of the French Broad River become part of the overall design of the greenway? How do we use interpretive information to educate and integrate that into the design? Such design considerations must be evaluated and suggestions for their solution must be proposed.

The challenge of the Asheville Open Space Design Charette, therefore, was to study the proposed recommendations of *The Riverfront Plan* in light of the actual achievements of the intervening years and formalize design guidelines for common elements within all Asheville greenways.



*The charette team gets to work after hours of dialogue and reviewing resource materials, including *The Riverfront Plan*. Photo: Weststar.*

What's happened since the April, 1989 charette?

RiverLink: The Catalyst for Riverfront Development

Shortly after the close of the first charette, the French Broad Riverfront Planning Committee incorporated and changed its name to **RiverLink, Inc.** — a name that better describes the organization's particular talent, of linking diverse energies and resources to achieve a common goal. Committee members, determined to re-link the river physically and economically to Downtown, West Asheville, UNCA, and Biltmore Village, felt that the new name would sound more action-oriented, appropriate since the major planning stages were complete and it was time to get to work. In terms of raising the public consciousness of the project, RiverLink is a more effective name — briefer and more memorable.

In October of 1990, meeting space in the historic Hans Rees Tannery building was donated to RiverLink by riverfront property owner and RiverLink board member Benson Slosman. The meeting space gave the organization a presence on the riverfront and provided a place for meetings, receptions, public hearings, and the permanent display of maps and drawings. Committees that previously had been meeting all over Asheville in restaurants and borrowed board rooms to work on specific parts of *The Riverfront Plan* started springing into concerted action once regular meeting space was made available. Significant progress has been made out of the RiverLink office, even though the

organization still operates without a computer, telephone, or other office equipment.

It is interesting to note that the Hans Rees Tannery was vacant during the 1989 charette. But by the 1991 charette, a mere two years later, the building boasted 110,000 square feet of rented space and 150 employees working inside.

Today RiverLink is a 501(c)(3) tax exempt nonprofit organization, whose financial records are kept by a certified public accountant. The Executive Director, Karen Cragnoilin, works full-time and is funded through grants, City/County government, and private donations. RiverLink's board of directors includes representatives from area business, riverfront property owners, city and county government, and regional organizations with an interest in riverfront activities and economic development.

Recognition of The Riverfront Plan: Local Government

Shortly after the 1989 charette, RiverLink presented *The Riverfront Plan* to City and County government as a citizen-supported plan of action for riverfront development, with a request for official endorsement. The first charette team recommended that such endorsement be gained and also encouraged continuing cooperation with city and county government. In 1989, the City adopted specific recommendations of *The Riverfront Plan* as an addendum to the 2010 Plan — "the comprehensive long-range planning guide for the City of Asheville that represents the collective vision of Asheville citizens." During citizen hearings on the 2010 Plan Addendum, *The*

Riverfront Plan was also endorsed by 35 citizen groups and organizations. RiverLink now reports progress on *The Riverfront Plan's* implementation to Asheville City Council every six months.

Also in 1989, the Buncombe County Commissioners adopted *The Riverfront Plan* as the official County vision for riverfront development. Both the City and County officially designated RiverLink as the organization to coordinate the economic and environmental development of the Asheville riverfront. RiverLink is closely allied with the French Broad River Foundation, but its *geographic* focus is smaller (a 6-mile stretch of the river within the Asheville city limits rather than the river from point of origin in Transylvania County to the Tennessee state line) and its *strategic* focus is larger (all aspects of economic development, rather than just river access and water quality).

RiverLink is also allied with the Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce. In 1986, the Chamber hired a consultant to review the assets of Asheville and determine what additional attractions could be developed that would appeal to the 750,000 people who annually visit the Biltmore Estate, so that they would stay one more day. The answer — the French Broad River.

Recognition of The Riverfront Plan: Public and Professional

The Riverfront Plan has been widely recognized, as both a published document and a plan for action. In 1989, the book received a **PICA** (Printing Industry of the Carolinas) award for a 2-color publication. Also in

1989, RiverLink received the **Quality Forward Award** for creating an opportunity for citizen collaboration and participation in a planning challenge, and its publication. Quality Forward is an Asheville-based organization focused on river clean-up, recycling, tree preservation, and public education.

In 1990, *The Riverfront Plan* received the NCAPA (NC Chapter, American Planning Association) **Large Community Outstanding Planning Award**. In the same year, the Land-of-Sky Regional Council recognized RiverLink with its **Friend of the River Award** — for creating and documenting a process that could be replicated throughout the 117-mile river basin.

The efforts of RiverLink and associated task force committees have also been widely cited in the press and studied at conferences. The June, 1990 issue of **National Geographic** magazine included discussion of the first Asheville Riverfront Charette in the article, *Greenways: Paths for the Future*, by Noel Grove. The project also is reviewed in a chapter of Charles E. Little's book, *Greenways for America*, published by Johns Hopkins University Press in 1990. **Countryside** magazine's Spring '91 issue cited RiverLink in the article, *Our Green Team: 12 Local Heroes Who Care About the Land*. The proposed artificial whitewater course was featured in an article in the October '89 **Canoe** magazine and is scheduled for an article in the Winter '92 issue of **Currents** magazine.

The Riverfront Plan was presented by RiverLink Director Karen Cragolin at the September, 1989 International Conference

on Greenways, Riverways, and Parkways, held in Asheville and sponsored by the Appalachian Consortium, Blue Ridge Parkway, American Society of Landscape Architects, and other organizations. Other presentations about the project have been made at the 1990 Association of State Floodplain Managers Conference, the 1990 and 1991 N.C. Greenway Conferences in Winston-Salem and Durham, and at the Southeastern Regional conference in April '91 called Chattanooga Venture: *The Environmental Forum*, where Ms. Cragolin was a featured speaker with Eliot Wigginton, Philip Morris, Amory Lovins, and others.

RiverLink, in conjunction with the Asheville Parks and Recreation Department, will host the 1993 North Carolina Greenway Conference in Asheville.

Since the 1989 charette, Ms. Cragolin has spoken to more than 100 area civic and garden clubs, bringing news of *The Riverfront Plan* and building momentum for the project. An \$800 grant was awarded to RiverLink by Asheville's Potpourri Garden Club to produce a slide presentation used to introduce *The Riverfront Plan* at conferences, to prospective supporters and/or donors, and other interested groups.



The Riverfront Plan visualized lots of changes for this section of the French Broad River, including a bustling commercial "Riverfront District," park and picnic areas, and a manmade whitewater course. Photo: J. Weiland.

RiverLink has served as an advisor to the City of Rutland, Vermont, on its greenway initiative. Other cities and planning departments across the country are using *The Riverfront Plan* as a model for developing citizen participation, in greenway planning, and riverfront revitalization master plans. And, several graduate students are using sections of *The Riverfront Plan* for Masters theses and senior projects — RiverLink acts as advisor and resource for them all.

Recognition: Public Support

Because of the variety of the riverfront development proposals, people with diverse interests can all find something in *The Riverfront Plan* to support — and they do. Depending on their specific needs and interests, hundreds of volunteers have become involved and continue to express their support. Since the 1989 charette, RiverLink has received financial support from individuals in the community, the Asheville Council of Garden Clubs, Mountain Laurel Garden Club, Potpourri Garden Club, area Rotary Clubs, and the WNC Community Foundation. Much of the donated funds are earmarked for specific projects such as the river park to be developed on property donated by Carolina Power & Light (CP&L).

The local press is consistently supportive of RiverLink's efforts and regularly entreats Asheville citizens to get involved and make the dream become a reality. Citizens have come out in full force, joined the many task forces and committees, and made *The Riverfront Plan* their mission — either in part or in whole. New task forces have formed or incorporated into existing com-

mittees to address specific recommendations or proposals of *The Riverfront Plan*. The plan has proven to be an excellent planning tool — it offers specific recommendations, yet remains flexible enough to successfully integrate change when unique needs or real-life circumstances require adjustments.



Guests at the charette kickoff reception study the scale model of the proposed greenway. Photo: Weststar.

The Riverfront Plan In Action: Committees and Task Forces

Railway Museum

The drawing of Confluence Park in *The Riverfront Plan* includes a railway museum, in response to the comments of National Railway Historic Society (NRHS) members at the public hearings during the 1989 charette.

RiverLink has been supporting the efforts of the Asheville Chapter of the NRHS to open the Asheville Railway Historic Center. The location for the museum, the historic Community Lumber Company building at the corner of Meadow Road and Short McDowell Street, has been purchased by the Society; the first portion of the museum is expected to open at the end of 1992. Once the building is cleaned and readied for displays, the Society's inventory of historic memorabilia will be showcased — lanterns, signage, silver and china, and a substantial collection of train whistles, all representing the glory of the railroad's bygone days.

With RiverLink's assistance, the Asheville Chapter obtained a WNC Community Foundation Dogwood Fund Grant to lay a spur track behind the museum for the purpose of bringing Steam Engine #722 home to Asheville from Chattanooga. Norfolk-Southern Railroad will return the engine, which was active in Asheville from 1929 until 1954, once the spur is laid and a shelter is built. The engine will be cosmetically restored and will eventually be joined by a baggage car, caboose, and three other period cars.

To raise revenue for this project, the Asheville chapter will continue its Western North Carolina rail excursion business during the spring and fall months. When the Railway Historic Center is open, it will be an added Asheville tourist attraction and will also function as the headquarters for the excursion business.

Soccer Fields

The Riverfront Plan's drawings of Confluence Park and Depot Park include soccer fields, in response to the comments of Asheville-Buncombe Youth Soccer Association (ABYSA) representatives at the public hearings during the 1989 charette. While the plan tentatively situates soccer fields in small groupings at different points along the riverfront, the ABYSA has stressed the desirability of concentrating 10-15 fields in one location, for the purpose of hosting regional tournaments. RiverLink realizes that recreation can stimulate economic development and supports adapting *The Riverfront Plan* to accomplish such a goal.

A larger site for a concentration of soccer fields is now being sought and will be integrated into the overall project. Currently, RiverLink, ABYSA, the Nature Center, the Bikeways Task Force, and others are considering organizing a fundraising effort to acquire available land along the Swannanoa River at the site of old Lake Craig behind Buncombe County Recreation Park.

The Water Tower

Shown in *The Riverfront Plan's* detail drawings of the Riverfront District, the water tower of the historic Cotton Mill is a memorable riverfront structure, one that most people can immediately name and identify on the riverfront. Members of the Save the Water Tower Task Force, RiverLink, and The Preservation Society feel that its rehabilitation would be a visible symbol of positive change along the riverfront. To date, RiverLink has spoken with the water tower's owner, who has agreed to transfer

its access and footprint to the organization, and has received a bid for its restoration and a quote for its insurance. The next step is fundraising.

Bike Paths

Initiating the development of bike paths throughout the riverfront area is a Phase One recommendation (Immediate and



Greenways create opportunities for safe and scenic bicycling. Photo: J. Weiland.

Ongoing Action) of *The Riverfront Plan*. Representatives from the Blue Ridge Bicycle Club commented on the need for designated bikeways during the public hearings at the 1989 charette. This Club, represented by Claudia Nix, a RiverLink board member and former president of Blue Ridge Bicycle Club, has been instrumental in identifying and improving the safety of

bicycle routes, notably along the riverfront. "Share the Road with Cyclists" signs have been erected along riverfront roads from Asheville north to Marshall.

Shortly after the 1989 charette, the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) formed the Bikeways Task Force in Buncombe County. The task force has met almost weekly to identify preferred bike routes and note road conditions. A 1991 NCDOT grant will fund the implementation of a long-awaited biking suitability map that will delineate bicycle routes all over Buncombe County and rate them for road conditions, traffic conditions, and level of expertise needed.

RiverLink works with these bicycle interest groups in studying recommendations for improving the suitability of the bicycle as transportation, recreation, and a stimulus for economic development.

River Cleanup

Another Phase One recommendation of *The Riverfront Plan* is to "establish a river cleanup program to ensure that the river bed and banks are kept clear of junk, debris, and litter." RiverLink works with Quality Forward's existing river cleanup programs on a continuing basis, with special emphasis on Clean Streams Day each spring and during French Broad River Week each fall.

Pedestrian Access

Pedestrian, bicycle, and auto linkages were a major concern of the 1989 charette — linkages among different areas of the riverfront district, linkages between downtown and the riverfront, linkages among different neighborhoods and the surround-

ing county greenway areas. RiverLink works with the Pedestrian Action League to improve access throughout downtown Asheville and other public use areas.



The historic Cotton Mill and Water Tower are familiar sights on the Asheville skyline. Photo: J. Weiland.

Envisioned is a safe well-used pedestrian system with interpretive displays, leading from the downtown to the riverfront district, and eventually throughout the city and county.

Olympic Whitewater and Canoe/Kayak Practice Courses

Windy Gordon, former gold medalist of the U.S. Whitewater Paddling Team, spoke about the feasibility of an artificial whitewater course on the French Broad River at the public hearings during the 1989 charette. The development of such a course became a Phase One recommendation of *The Riverfront Plan*.

The announcement of Atlanta's hosting of the 1996 Olympics has spurred progress on the already developing whitewater project — a joint venture committee of

RiverLink and the Greater Asheville Chamber of Commerce was formed to specifically pursue the project. Several whitewater experts, including Olympic officials, U.S. Slalom Team coach and training coach, and slalom engineers have been invited to Asheville to review the proposed location. All have expressed enthusiasm for the project, endorsed the proposed course development, and indicated interest in relocating team training and event locations to Asheville.

Similar courses in other communities, most specifically South Bend, Indiana, where a \$4.5 million bond referendum to build the course as part of the city's riverfront revitalization effort has translated into \$45.7 million in private "brick and mortar" riverfront development, have been investigated by the committee.

Plans and drawings are also in process for a canoe/kayak training course on the French Broad River. This course would be a complement to the Olympic whitewater course and would be used recreationally as well as for training by canoe/kayak programs at Asheville YMCA, Warren Wilson College, UNCA, and Montreat-Anderson College. Champion International, with a plant in nearby Canton, is the official sponsor of the U.S. Canoe and Kayak Team and has indicated its desire to sponsor whitewater events at the Asheville course, once it is built. A grant application for \$30,000 to build the course is currently under review, as are permit applications to TVA and the Army Corps of Engineers for the installation of a manmade structure in a navigable river. Once developed, these

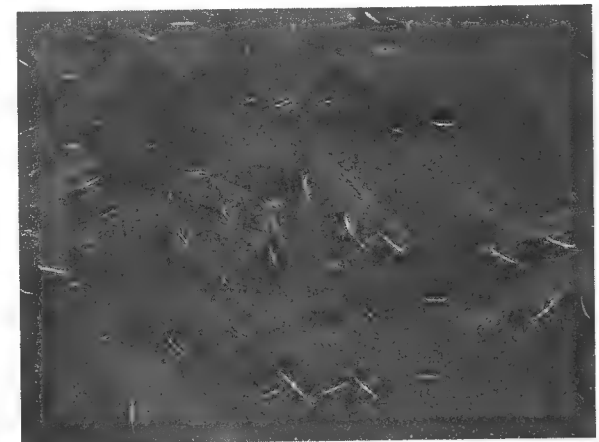
courses will help fill an identified gap in Asheville's tourist profile by attracting families and children to the area for water-oriented activities.

Other Committees

In addition to the above, RiverLink Executive Director Karen Cragnolin serves as the Chairman of the Asheville Tree and Greenway Commission's Greenway Subcommittee (see below), and works with the Asheville Track Association, The Preservation Society, WNC Paddlers, Asheville Council of Garden Clubs, and others.

The Riverfront Anchor Project

Another Phase One recommendation of *The Riverfront Plan* was to "designate an initial major focal element of the riverfront" and to "identify this area as a project starting point...." Immediately after the close of the 1989 charette, RiverLink presented the plan, along with a request for donation of greenway property, to major riverfront



Trout in the French Broad River help make the riverfront a natural attraction. Photo: J. Weiland.

property owner Carolina Power & Light.

CP&L agreed to transfer title of 1.9 miles of riverfront property — along Amboy Road, under the Carrier Bridge, and along the west bank of the French Broad to the Haywood Bridge — to the City of Asheville. The official donation in April 1991 facilitated the identification of the riverfront project's "initial major focal element," at the location of *The Riverfront Plan's* Confluence Park.

To honor such a significant first step toward realizing *The Riverfront Plan*, the new **Mayor's Greenway Award** was created and given to CP&L in recognition of its gift of property. The Award will continue to be presented to donors of property or public access along identified greenway routes in the city and eventually throughout Buncombe County.

With the first river park and greenway identified, RiverLink and Asheville Parks & Recreation sponsored a public hearing at which interested citizens shared their dreams for how the new park should be developed. Expected features include picnic areas, hiking and bicycling trails, boat access and fishing, parking areas, rest-rooms, and other facilities. It is also expected that the North Carolina Fish and Wildlife Commission will build and maintain boat ramps on the greenway property along Amboy Road. The WNC Chapter of the Surveyors' Association has agreed to survey the entire area as an in-kind donation.

Funding for the Anchor Site

The City of Asheville has set aside \$90,000 in Capital Improvement Project funds to be used to develop the first segment of the

greenway on the CP&L property. Because the property was donated in fee simple, the City was able to apply for \$75,000 from the Land and Water Conservation Fund to develop the greenway. Requests for financial support have been made to area garden clubs (a \$1,000 grant has been received from the Mountain Laurel Garden Club) and Rotary Clubs, for the purpose of furnishing the riverfront greenway with appropriate facilities and fixtures.



Greenways promote pedestrian access to the riverfront. Photo: J. Weiland.

The Asheville Council of Garden Clubs donated the funds needed to build a scale model of the project, which was unveiled during the 1991 River Week celebration. The model, designed to orient viewers to current developments in the riverfront project, includes the section from Amboy Road to the I-240 bridge, with the Cotton Mill Water Tower and whitewater courses represented. The model is also a tool for raising funds and stimulating community interest to complete the project, perhaps in time to celebrate the County's bicentennial in 1992.

On Valentine's Day 1992, RiverLink will kick off a new greenway program — "Start your love affair with the French Broad River" by purchasing one foot of greenway. It will then be an ongoing fund-raising and community support project.

Asheville Greenway Program

CP&L's transfer of title to the anchor site was a special link in a chain — virtually all of the land along the Swannanoa River between Buncombe County Recreation Park and Biltmore Village is publicly owned and when added to the CP&L property, the result is nearly 20 miles of existing available greenway. (A recent study conducted in Wisconsin documented that its 25-mile bicycle path attracted users from as far away as 150 miles and pumped an additional \$1.25 million into the local economy. The study's conclusion — recreation is economic development!)

The linking of the new anchor site to existing Swannanoa riverfront land extends the scope of the urban riverfront project and exemplifies yet another Phase One recommendation of *The Riverfront Plan* — "Identify greenway sections in the core Riverfront district...and initiate land acquisition and easements in designated greenway areas." Model greenway and sewer easement legislation has been submitted to local authorities as a tool to make this vision a reality.

The 1989 charette emphasized the importance of greenway space and of linking the riverfront project to greenway sections within the city (by way of the Emerald Necklace and Patton Avenue Spine, which

will link downtown Asheville and adjacent neighborhoods with the riverfront district) and to larger greenway sections of Buncombe County and Western North Carolina.

The protection of green space is not new to Asheville. Earlier in this century, the City hired planner and landscape designer John Nolen to develop "The Asheville City Plan," which was completed in 1922. Nolen recognized the benefit of natural resources, to promote tourism and residential development. He proposed planned, urban public spaces and parks in city neighborhoods, all connected by "park drives" or greenways.

In the tradition of John Nolen, RiverLink actively advocates the preservation and development of open, green space in Buncombe County today, because such space benefits the environment, preserves land for citizens' enjoyment, creates buffers between commercial and residential areas, and provides attractive pathways from park to park, neighborhood to neighborhood, riverfront to downtown.

Before the 1989 charette, RiverLink Executive Director Karen Cragnolin joined the Asheville Tree Commission, recognizing that trees and greenways would be a vital part of riverfront development. After the publication of *The Riverfront Plan*, the greenway portion of the Asheville Tree and Greenway Commission was activated in recognition of the need to identify and develop city and county greenways. The Commission also adopted, in principle, *The Riverfront Plan's* concepts of the Emerald Necklace and Patton Avenue Spine. For the first time, the Commission addressed the



At the charette kickoff reception, interested citizens cast their votes for the most important greenway elements the charette team members should consider in their design. Photo: Weststar.

issue of greenways — bolstered by a specific plan of action (*The Riverfront Plan*) and a specific organization (RiverLink) to spearhead efforts toward greenway development.

The greenway portion of the Asheville Tree and Greenway Commission has met weekly since 1989. With the expertise, energy, and vision of Dr. Lowell Orbison, the group drew upon John Nolen's plan for Asheville and adapted it to the changed face of Buncombe County. The group recognized the need for a demonstration project to get the community excited and interested in county-wide greenway development — the CP&L project was perfect.

Two sub-committees were set up to pursue the development of greenways both locally and regionally — the Priority sub-committee and the Greenway Master Plan sub-committee. After an extensive investigation

of available greenway sites, the Priority sub-committee established the CP&L river park as a first priority, with RiverLink as the project coordinator. The Greenway Master Plan sub-committee works toward extending the vision of *The Riverfront Plan* through the entire county; the group's plan is currently being mapped by the County Planning Department and will be documented in an upcoming RiverLink book.

During this same period, the City initiated the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) process. One of the UDO committees was charged with looking specifically at the riverfront and translating the vision of mixed used development into planning tools and incentives for creating an environment along the French Broad and Swannanoa Rivers that would be conducive to recreation, yet would also interlace residential, commercial, and new industrial uses into the rivers' corridors. The UDO Riverfront Committee has been meeting biweekly for nearly a year in the RiverLink office; many of the first meetings were devoted to tours of the riverfronts, presentations of maps, and the vision of *The Riverfront Plan*.

As this book goes to press, the UDO Riverfront Committee has agreed on a number of key elements: The French Broad River will eventually be a future drinking water source for the City of Asheville and Buncombe County, which will influence the use of "soft engineering" techniques and environmental buffers. Such soft engineering provides natural opportunities to develop walking, jogging, and bike paths, as well as other recreational facilities.

The committee also has unanimously agreed that the riverfronts have the potential to become major tourist attractions and well-used and loved local amenities. One concept that has been universally endorsed is to encourage the Blue Ridge Parkway to route users through the riverfront greenway along the Swannanoa River past the new Parkway headquarters at Hemphill Knob and along the French Broad River at the North Carolina Arboretum, which is expected to draw more than a million visitors each year.

Design Competition

RiverLink and the Asheville Parks & Recreation Department began planning for the development of the anchor park on the CP&L property, with the help of citizen comments made at public hearings on the project and with the support of the Asheville Tree & Greenway Commission. The next step was to define the various elements of the new park space — jogging and hiking trails, bike paths, picnic shelters, parking areas, signage, lighting, restrooms and other amenities — that would need to be designed, funded, and installed. Planning was guided by another Phase One recommendation of *The Riverfront Plan* — to “sponsor a design competition for the anchor site,” for the purpose of selecting designs for the various facilities and amenities listed above.

RiverLink received a \$20,000 grant from the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation, \$36,200 from the Janirve Foundation, and \$7,000 from the North Carolina Arts Council for organizing such a design competition. Jeffrey Ollswang and Lawrence

Witzling of Design Competition Services, Inc. in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, were contacted and have agreed to act as competition advisors to RiverLink. If RiverLink does sponsor a competition, they will contribute their expertise to the proper organization and marketing of the competition to ensure positive results.

Since the anchor site project has been identified, its linkage to downtown, UNCA, Biltmore Village, and Asheville neighborhoods have become an important challenge. *The Riverfront Plan* may once again demonstrate its ability to adjust to real-life challenges by revising the design goals of the recommended competition to focus on linkages, especially on the major downtown connector — the Chicken Hill area.

In anticipation of the competition, RiverLink Executive Director Karen Cragnoлин visited Atlanta with the competition advisors to witness the logistics and jurying of their “Design on Peachtree” competition. RiverLink also has applied for Community Block Development Grant (CBDG) funds to study Chicken Hill.

To establish some design parameters for the competition required that a foundation be laid — that basic guidelines for style of facilities and design types be pre-determined so that competition entries or other design planning work would be compatible with *The Riverfront Plan's* goals for the current and future development of riverfront sites. RiverLink decided that the most productive method for establishing such basic guidelines was to sponsor another charette. The character for all elements of public open space development along the

river would be outlined by the charette team members.

Real-life events and progress established an immediate need for laying such a design foundation, since RiverLink and the City of Asheville scheduled the anchor site groundbreaking for September 1991. RiverLink therefore renegotiated the \$7,000 N.C. Arts Council grant to fund the Asheville Riverfront Open Space Charette and began to assemble the team.

The 1991 charette team recommended a rather different approach to riverfront design. They suggested a multi-disciplined team comprised of architects, landscape architects, artists and sculptors, tinkers, local and regional historians. They recommended a greenway that celebrates the evolution of this community's history, culture, and lore. (See “*The Greenway Spirit*” on page 21.)



RiverLink Executive Director Karen Cragnoлин (left foreground) chats with charette team member Rich Untermann outside the RiverLink office, where the charette took place. Photo: Weststar.

“The greenway project has to be designed at 3 mph.

We live in a 35 mph world, where everything in the street has to be simplified so drivers traveling at 35 mph can comprehend what they are passing. The greenway should be very detailed, full of variety and texture. It should be very complex and diverse, to engage and entertain people walking at 3 mph.”

— Rich Untermann

“Asheville is fortunate to have a significant population of diverse talent — writers, visual artists, traditional craftpersons, performers, designers, and others who take an active interest in the cultural development of neighborhoods and public spaces. The possibility for engaging this talent to respond to special problems — the treatment of bridge railings, the choreography of pathways, the creation of signage — is a challenge to the cultural community.”

— Jan Brooks Loyd

Design guidelines are normally established to convey the standards and criteria to be complied with during the development of land in a specific area, neighborhood, or situation. Often, design guidelines support a policy or philosophy established by a governing body, community, or private developer.

Guidelines may present a very narrow allowable range of acceptable design alternatives, or may define general conditions and encourage creative imagination throughout the planning and design process. The Asheville Riverfront guidelines support the latter philosophy of encouraging artistic and creative interpretation in all stages of the development of the riverfront corridor.

In addition to their degree of definition, guidelines may be mandatory or voluntary. The Charette Team supports the concept that the Asheville Riverfront guidelines should be adopted by all governing agencies as mandatory in the development of **public** greenway areas. For **private** lands or private greenway areas that connect to the public system, compliance should be voluntary. It is hoped that private landowners and developers will accept these guidelines as a basis for incorporating private greenway development into the concept and fabric of the public greenway system.

Design guidelines are intended to foster the recognition and enhancement of elements that are or have been important parts of the community fabric. These elements may include historic resources, archaeological resources, or natural systems and resources. Of equal concern is the consider-

ation for funding the implementation of guidelines so that a climate of economic deterrence is not created. Each of these elements is discussed below as they relate to the Asheville river corridor.

Consideration of Natural Systems

The steep bluffs along the Asheville river corridor stand as a unique testimony to the power of an old river cutting its way through the rising mountains. Although in the past the bluffs have served to divide the city, they rise above the river corridor to provide for the viewing of this unique resource.

Along its banks, the river's movement developed broad floodplain areas. These areas serve to clean and filter water, traveling down the adjacent slopes before entering the river. The quality of the water in the river is directly proportional to the quality of the adjacent floodplain or filter zones. The vegetation within the floodplains and on adjacent slopes is equally important and, in this region, unique. Here in Western North Carolina, the northern and southern forests merge, offering a variety of native plant material found nowhere else.

Of importance also are the needs of the abundant wildlife along the river banks and into the uplands beyond. Even though the river runs through the heart of the city, its banks and bluff areas provide corridors for wildlife moving throughout the region.

The need to understand and integrate the importance and unique quality of these elements into the framework of urban development cannot be overemphasized. The guidelines presented here attempt to

reflect the importance of incorporating the environmental fabric into the greenway concept.

Historic Resources

The historic patterns of development and land use of the river corridor in Asheville offer a strong framework for rejuvenation of the river. Structures offer a variety of architectural characters and indigenous materials reflective of the growth and physical character of Asheville's past.

Access to the river corridor reflects the importance the river played in the early growth of Asheville as well as its abandonment as an economic center after the 1916 flood. The loss of good access shows the cultural division that eventually separated Asheville into two distinct communities.

However, even through floods and abandonment, the river has remained a microcosm of the historic growth and change within the larger community. These guidelines strive to capture this character and promote its enhancement.

Archaeological Resources

Separate from and yet intricately intertwined with the more recent history of the river corridor are the archaeological patterns of use, culture, and lifestyle dating back to the time called prehistory. Long before settlement by the white man, the river corridor was home to many Indian settlements. *Zehleeka*, one name given to the river by the Cherokee, signified a corridor connecting the broad plateau and coastal plain of the south to the lands of the west.

Along the river banks, a trading route emerged that connected the cultures of the east and west. In later years, this route became known as the Buncombe Turnpike, the primary route linking the farmers and settlers of the west to markets of the east. Still later, the railroad used the river corridor as a hub from which it extended throughout the region.

The patterns of use established over the past 1,000 years helped define the cultural heritage reflected in the river corridor today. This blending of cultures offers unlimited opportunities for expression in the revitalization of the river as an influential element in the growth of the city. Key to the design guidelines is the concept of recognizing and utilizing these cultural elements.

Funding Considerations

The mandate to the 1989 charette team was *“to create a master plan for revitalizing the urban riverfront, which would explore mixed use potential and would be environmentally sound, economically possible, and integrated with ongoing urban development in Asheville.”*

Economically possible is, in many ways, the key phrase. Funding for any nonprofit is always a concern, and RiverLink has been especially adept at stretching dollars and leveraging in-kind donations to produce attractive products such as a four-color brochure, The Riverfront Plan, a scale model of the CP&L confluence park greenway, maps, and other items necessary to carry forward the vision of a revitalized urban river corridor.

The 1991 charette’s recommendations created the possibility for new funding sources. If we are to explore our history and riverfront culture in the greenway design, the Native Americans who once lived in villages along the shores should have their story told by way of interpretive information along the greenway. Grant monies and federal funds are available for this type of exhibit.

A tall water tower that has graced the Asheville skyline for nearly a century is both historic and a piece of public art. Funds from the National Endowment for the Arts may help restore this structure, along with funds raised by the local Save the Water Tower Committee.

The 1991 Team recommended using materials that are indigenous to the area and tapping the collective talent of the many Asheville artisans and craftsmen in the design of individual greenway elements. Much of the raw talent and materials needed to complete this project are already here.

There are a number of projects within the RiverLink greenway development that could be very interesting public art projects. The signage, seating, and certain landscape ideas lend themselves to artist/architect collaboration. Some excellent case studies document historic preservation groups that have teamed up with art organizations to apply for funding for restoration projects. Such restoration is not “pure” in the sense that the object or building is put back exactly the way it was originally, but rather it is improved without destroying the original form.

The riverfront greenway will use recycled products wherever possible. The Market Square Park in downtown Houston (Texas) is a good example of incorporating recycled construction materials into the overall scheme. The park’s walkways are a collage of salvaged fragments from Houston buildings, sidewalks, parking lots, etc. — they are incorporated into a matrix of new and recycled brick paving, concrete of varying textures, and perhaps asphalt.

The same creativity that was invested in these design guidelines must also be invested in devising funding options. The Adopt-A-Highway program could easily be adapted to the greenway development — garden clubs, bicycle and hiking groups, art student leagues, and civic organizations could all “adopt” portions of the greenway for development and maintenance. Special events can be sponsored to benefit the greenway. Corporate funding and private donations can be sought to fund specific elements of the greenway, such as a bench or gate, a stretch of artfully patterned walkway, or a picnic shelter.

Periodic one-day mini-charettes can be scheduled, at which designers, financial experts, and business and government representatives can focus on the funding of greenway elements and overall development.

The purpose of the Asheville Riverfront Public Open Space Charette was to establish design standards that will guide the development and improvement of the various components of a riverfront public greenway system for Asheville. These design guidelines articulate the character of both the natural and manmade parts of the greenway and set minimum standards for their implementation within the system. They are written to protect the environment of the riverfront and to provide the citizens of Asheville convenient and sensitive use of this amenity.

These design guidelines will play an important part in ensuring that not only the ecology of the riverfront will be protected but its appearance and use will be directed so that its natural character will not be compromised. Development of riverfront public open spaces along a greenway system will help engender a further appreciation of the river and enhance the overall livability of our community.

These design guidelines were developed by a diverse team of design professionals, landscape architects, architects, artists, and graphic and industrial designers, and should be seen as the foundation and a tool for continuing the design process by other teams working together to further develop specific greenway components.

The guidelines take into consideration three distinct areas of concern in the design of the greenway: Access and Landscape, Structures and Facilities, and Graphics, which when used together, will help create an identifiable and unified whole. The guidelines were written to

provide the community with recommendations and standards that will protect and enhance the special regional character of the natural environment along the river, allow for built structures that are compatible with the landscape, and define technical standards that will guarantee proper construction and accessibility within the entire greenway corridor.

It was a goal of the charette process to see that these design guidelines are incorporated by the City of Asheville or any other public or governmental body involved in the development of the Riverfront greenway system when public improvements are made along that corridor. Private developers whose properties lie within the greenway system are encouraged to adopt these standards when undertaking improvements on their property in hopes that a continuous and accessible linkage along the river will be developed.

“I picture an extensive network of beautiful corridors passing through everyone’s neighborhood and linking them with their entire community and beyond. An attractive corridor to lead one to school, work, or shopping, which is environmentally sensitive and simply beautiful.”

— Al Kopf

Considerations for Greenway Design Guidelines

During discussions among Team members about design guidelines, the following considerations were understood to be necessary in any current or future greenway development.

Access and Landscape:

- Slope stabilization
- Reforestation/forest management
- Pedestrian, bike, equestrian trails
- Emergency access
- Transit interface
- Pavements for roads/parking lots
- Buffers/streetscapes
- River stabilization
- Floodplain replanting/restoration
- Service access
- Entrances/portals
- Edge control for roads/parking lots

Structures and Facilities:

- Walls
- Restroom buildings
- Overlook structures/decks
- Fishing points
- Fencing and gates
- Boat ramps/launching points
- Shelters
- Service storage structures
- Stairs/steps/ramps
- Picnic tables
- Pedestrian bridges

Graphics:

- Identification signage
- Internal directional signage
- External directional signage
- Interpretive art
- Utility detailing
- Parcours exercise stations
- Interpretive display structures
- Accent and security lighting
- Historical markers

Other Elements:

Improvements relating to adjacent private development:

- Residential edges and connections
- Retail/business edges
- Commercial/industrial fringe and view shed
- Utility/railroad impact

Improvements relating to adjacent public facilities:

- Electric substations
- Expressways
- Highway right-of-ways
- Trails and streetscapes

Improvements relating to existing structures:

- Railway and vehicle bridges
- Power poles
- Transition lines
- Sewer/storm outfalls

“Though the Riverfront Open Space project is a massive undertaking, it will be the little touches that provide the perceived success of the effort.”

— Joe Sonderman

"The Asheville Riverfront Greenway has the opportunity for uniqueness among greenways in America."

This statement represents the consensus of the Team as the character of guidelines for greenway development formed. There are many things that contribute to this belief. Environmentally, the dramatic topography along the river, and the variety and extent of vegetation are rarely found in urban river situations. The rich history, rugged vernacular, and broad palette of indigenous materials of the Asheville region add to the quality as well.

Perhaps most unique is the relatively low density of development and broad mix of land uses throughout the river corridor, offering an exceptional opportunity of intertwining the greenway environment throughout the development as an enhancement to economic growth. These factors along with the lack of long, continuous walkways throughout Asheville, combine to produce an ideal situation for an already booming market of walkers, bicyclists, and other greenway users.

The Team's vision is a greenway that provides safe and convenient access between the river, neighborhoods, and development within the river corridor and the West Asheville and downtown areas. Expansion of the greenway along the entire river corridor would easily allow for the connection of the three college campuses — UNCA, A-B Tech, and Warren Wilson College. Additionally, the greenway offers the potential for the expansion of the ongoing effort in cleaning up the rivers by

providing areas for cleansing storm water runoff, expansion of flood water storage areas, and general cleanup of the river edge.

A key to the successful design and integration of the greenway into the riverfront community is to encourage that the design team be well-diversified. Designers, artists, landscape architects, architects, and engineers are as important to the design team as tinkers, citizens, and business owners. The spirit would be to create "trails" or walkways serving a variety of non-motorized uses, filled with unanticipated elements. Walkway areas artfully paved with indigenous materials; a bench carved by a local artisan; neighborhood or community history described in some unique manner; areas for activities that promote the rich arts within the community; or educational displays explaining an adjacent business are but a few of the opportunities that exist. Imagination is a key to the creation of the greenway spirit.

To fulfill its task, the Team was divided into three teams to address specific guidelines for the various elements that commonly occur in greenways. These teams were:

- Access and Landscape
- Structures and Facilities
- Graphics

Through the following pages, each of these areas are dealt with in greater detail, and the Team's recommendations are presented. These recommendations are offered as guidelines, which should be considered in the design and implementation of elements that make up the greenway. Whether the greenway is public or private, the recommendations from the Team provide for the development of unifying elements aimed at integrating a greenway system into the fabric of the entire Asheville community.

"Our challenge will be to develop this greenway in such a way as to be both a part of nature, by bringing the regional landscape into the city, and an expression of all that is uniquely Asheville in character through the quality design of all we add to this environment."

— Jane Gianvito Mathews

The Charette Process

Much of the success of the 1989 charette was attributed to the multi-disciplined team assembled by RiverLink. Architects and landscape architects viewed things differently than planners and each other, yet the interaction among them seemed to create a synergy and energy that brought out the best from all involved.

Armed with that knowledge, RiverLink set out to assemble a second charette team even more diverse. To design the elements of a riverfront greenway that would have immediate application for the anchor project and become the catalyst for further development would require even more diversity, energy, and synergy.

Every element of the greenway should speak to the history, culture, and lore of the area. The natural characteristics of the river and the built environment should reflect the best from our past traditions and the brightest vision of our future. The greenway should be educational; interpretive exhibits should celebrate nature and incorporate innovative design ideas with functional elements. Built for function, bollards, walls, and footpaths all can be objects of art as well.

The second charette team was comprised of architects, landscape architects, studio artists, writers, photographers, planners, sculptors, public art experts, graphic and product designers who came together to brainstorm the best ways to incorporate and integrate all of the above needs into every aspect of the greenway.

All artists, whether they be wordsmiths or painters, have their own vocabulary. The

same word can mean different things and conjure up different visions for a sculptor or a landscape architect. The challenge and the charge to the 1991 RiverLink charette team was to bridge any vocabulary gaps and to use the landscape as the canvas for designing the riverfront greenway.

Traditional answers to the questions, "What is art?" and "Who is the artist?," quickly evaporated. For this project, art is utilizing the region's history and ecosystems as integral elements of the design. Art is a well-turned phrase or a beautiful sunset or a blue heron in flight over the French Broad River. Art is a comfortable bench that incorporates an ancient Indian weave pattern and native materials into its design. The landscape architect is no less an artist than the studio artist — what is different is the media they use.

The Team began its work with a bold challenge from the RiverLink Board of Directors:

- Don't attempt to alter the landscape.
- Do include native and natural vegetation in the design.
- Make it pedestrian-friendly.
- Make it inviting for all ages and ability levels.
- Design it to discourage vandals.
- Make the roads and access points safe for the bicyclists, fishermen, and truck drivers who will use them.
- Incorporate as much history, culture, and lore as possible.

Armed with the charge from the RiverLink Board, the Team then considered the community's requests for greenway ele-

ments. At the charette kickoff reception, guests were invited to "cast their ballots" for the most important greenway design considerations.

The top citizen "vote-getters" were:

security, accessibility, flexibility/multi-use potential, environmental impact, maintenance, vegetation/landscaping, beauty/harmony

Next in line were:

wildlife, access, public art, historical context, flood proofing, educational/interpretive, cost, parking

During the discussions of the next few days, the citizens' vote was kept posted where all team members could see it. The vote served as a reminder of how the Asheville community wanted the Team to focus its diverse talents on the project.

Initial team dialogue helped define the purpose and establish the goals for the project. Opinions were voiced and questioned, biases were challenged, and design proposals were evaluated. The different points of view reflected the different members' disciplines, from graphic design to flood control, architecture to public art.

The common goals that emerged from this dialogue were a natural product of the synergistic process — representative of the component elements, yet somehow more dynamic because of their intermarriage.

- **Environment**
 - **Cultural/Natural Interpretation**
 - **Transportation & Access**
 - **Art**
 - **Use of Indigenous Materials**
 - **Security**
 - **Implementation & Cost**
-

Environment

Greenways shall serve as ecological corridors for successful riverfront development.

OBJECTIVES

Explore opportunities for:

- “Soft” and landscape engineering.
- Identification and alteration of inappropriate land uses.
- Respect of flood hazard.
- Clean-up of polluted sites.
- Creation of wildlife corridor.
- Maintaining/restoring wetlands.
- Clean-up of water quality.

Cultural/Natural Interpretation

Greenways shall incorporate recreation and the interpretation of regional and local cultural and natural heritage.

OBJECTIVES

Explore opportunities for:

- Environment and natural systems.
- Pre-historical and historical education and interpretation.
- Folklore & mountain legend education and interpretation.
- Illuminating “history in the making.”
- Providing appropriate recreation.

Transportation and Access

Greenways shall complement existing vehicular access and elevate the visual and functional quality of pedestrian and bicycle movement, as well as water connections.

OBJECTIVES

Explore opportunities for:

- Improved water-oriented access.
- Improved pedestrian access to downtown, across river, along river, and to focal areas.
- Upgraded bicycle access.
- Improved adjacent roads as “park roads” or “greenway streets” and “parkways.”
- Creation of vistas to corridor.
- Buffering visual encroachments.
- Incorporating access for all.

Art

Greenways shall integrate creativity and imagination into all aspects of design.

OBJECTIVES

Explore opportunities for:

- Performance art.
- Traditional and indigenous art.
- Functional art.
- Participatory art.
- Experimental art.
- Places for permanent and temporary exhibition and display.
- Art as social experience

Use of Indigenous Materials

Greenways shall make use of materials and construction techniques that are native or unique to Asheville and this region.

OBJECTIVES

Explore opportunities for:

- Consistent use of indigenous natural materials.
- Experimentation.
- Regional vernacular design.
- Use of native plant materials.

Security and Safety

Greenways shall be safe.

OBJECTIVES

Explore opportunities for:

- Public facilities.
- Creation of relatively unobstructed views.
- Facilities that encourage appropriate uses.
- Appropriate safety and security shall be a primary design consideration.

Implementation and Costs

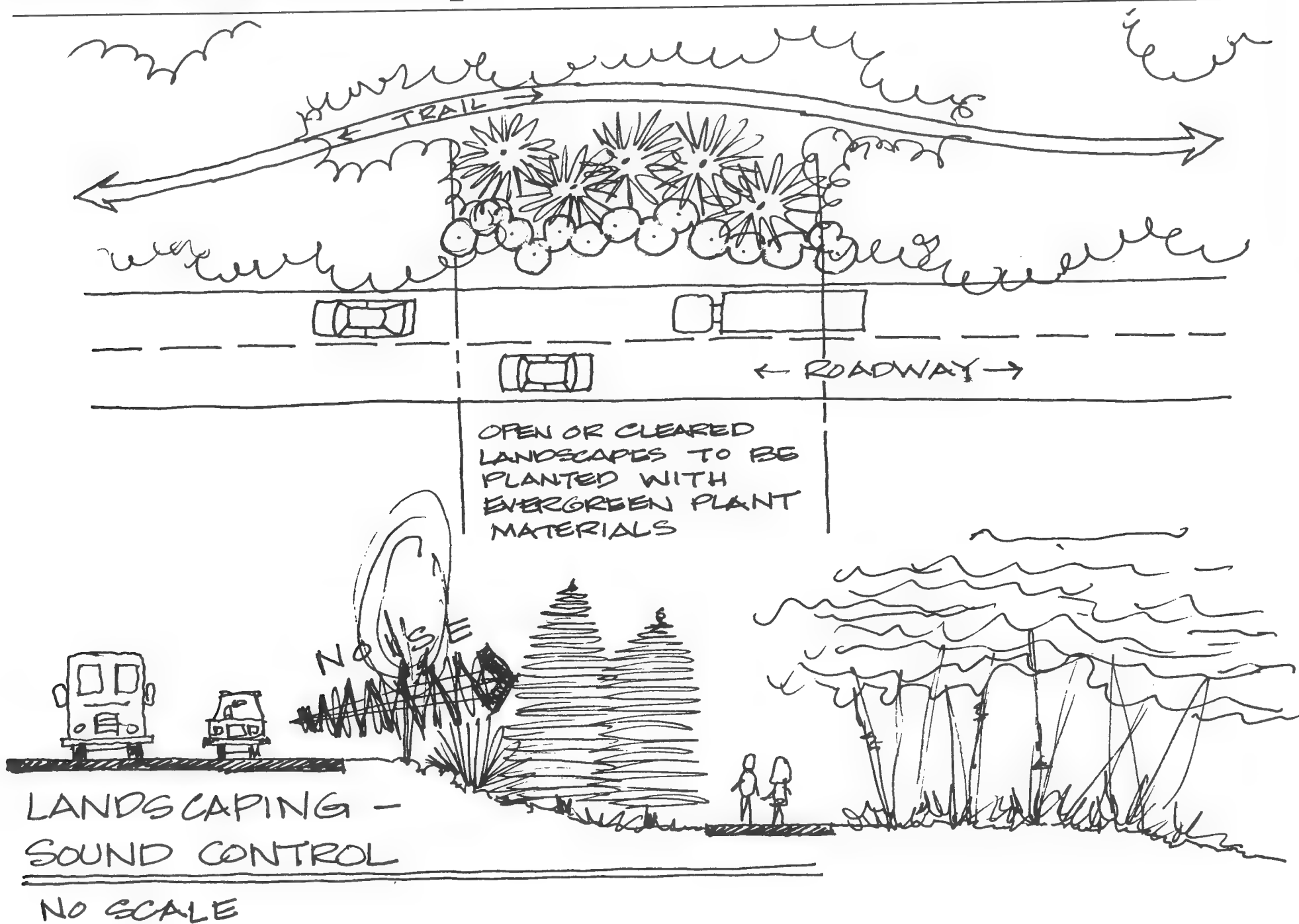
Greenways shall be cost effective to build and maintain.

OBJECTIVES

Explore opportunities for:

- Use of cost effective design, materials, and construction techniques.
- Encouraging community involvement.
- Well-planned implementation.
- Cultivation of funding partnerships.
- Multiple use facilities and creative funding options.

Access and Landscape



Access and Landscape Team:

Charles A. Flink, ASLA; Dan Millspaugh, MFA; Dr. Richard Untermann, ASLA.

The Access and Landscape Team was charged with the task of addressing access to and through the greenway system, and the opportunities for environmental improvement of the landscape that the greenway can offer.

The Team recommends a greenway that would include:

- A continuous pedestrian and bicycle trail, separated from the road, along at least one side of the entire length of both rivers, possibly crossing back and forth.
- Improvement of all roads that parallel the rivers to include safe and comfortable bike and pedestrian routes.
- Numerous smaller pedestrian and bicycle connections to adjacent neighborhoods and the downtown, constructed as neighborhoods saw their need.
- Adjustments of land use and maintenance along the river to improve the quality of the river environment. These might include zoning changes to prohibit toxic or noxious uses, setbacks to increase flood water storage, soft engineering techniques, etc.
- Bus routing and parking improvements to assist greenway users.

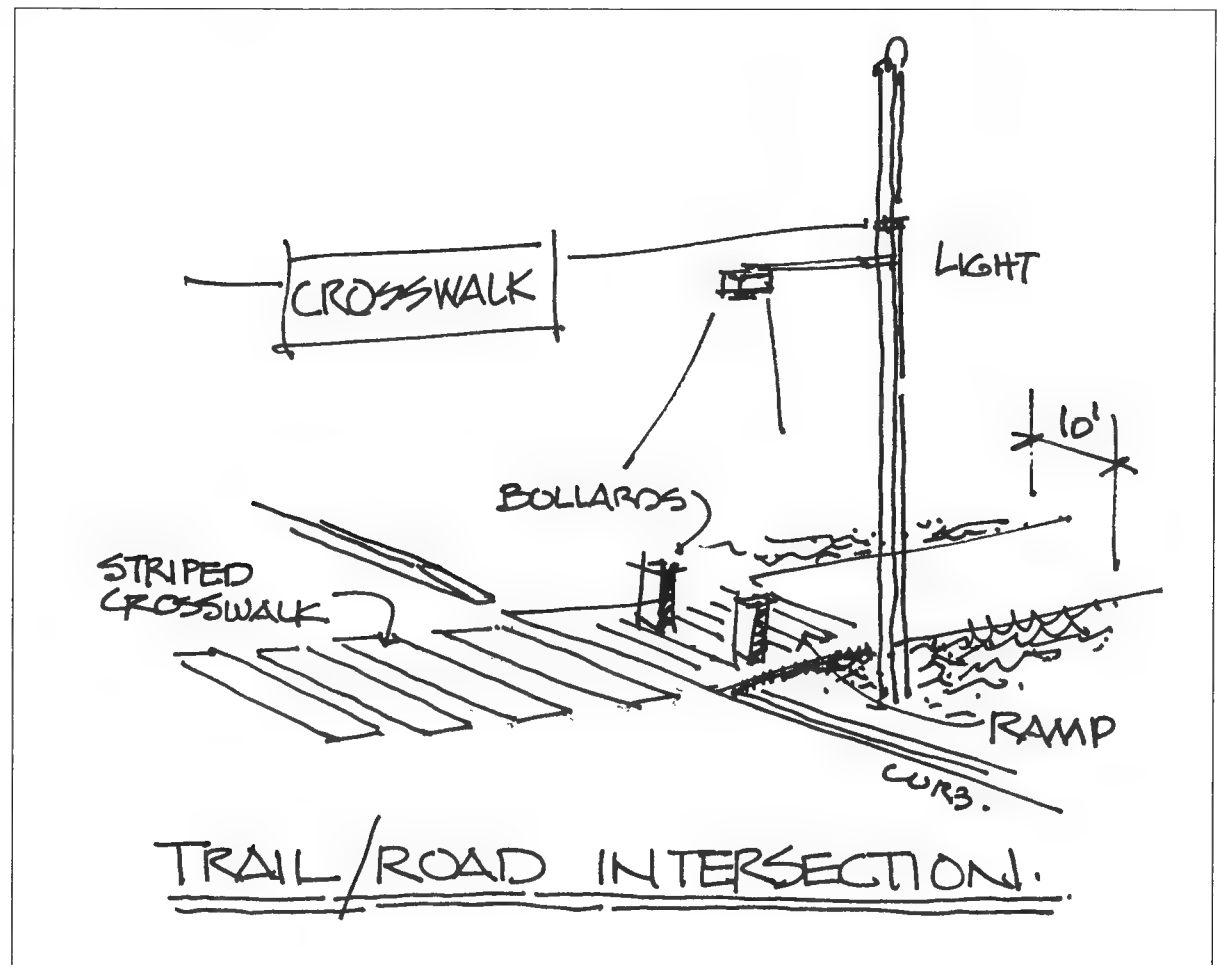
Transit Service to Greenway

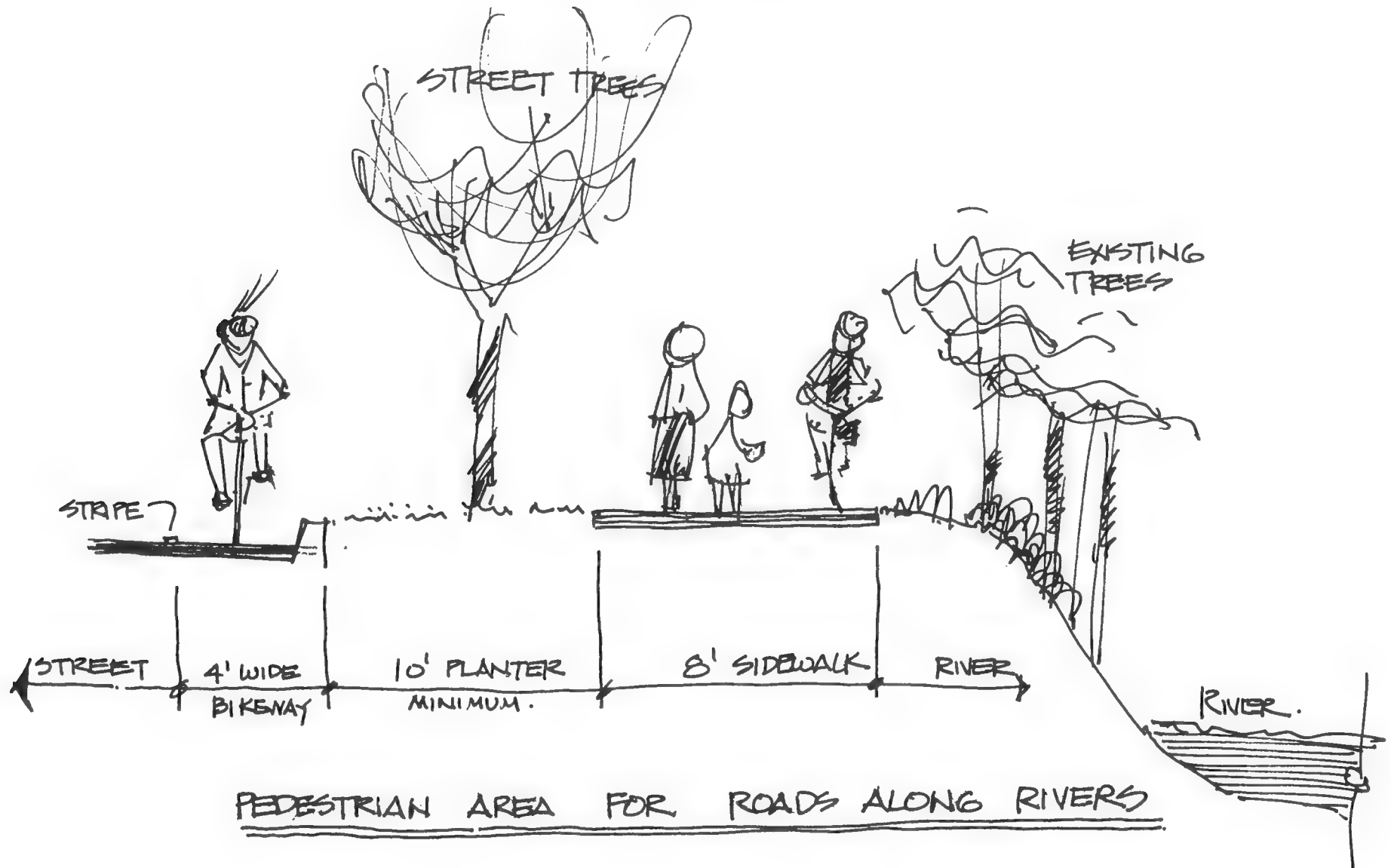
Most bus service is anticipated to serve the Riverfront Greenway at bridge crossings, dropping passengers off just prior to crossing the bridge. Care must be given to

ensure a safe bus stop – separated from traffic, raised 6" to sidewalk grade, and preferably with a covered waiting area and seating. A sidewalk leading from the bus stop to the riverside trails should be part of the trail system — crossing streets in clearly marked crosswalks with ramps for wheelchairs, bicycles, or strollers.

Multi-Use Trails

Travel speed and size of vehicle help determine which modes of travel should be separated — typically pedestrians are separated from cars, and bikes are separated from pedestrians. However, in greenways, the recreational potential and limited space suggest that combining bicycles and pedestrians is necessary — given a wide





enough trail and walking/bicycling courtesy. Greenway trails will also attract other wheeled vehicles — skates, strollers, skateboards, service and emergency vehicles — all pressing for space and recognition. The ideal solution is a variety of routes along the river that might include:

- A minimum 10'-wide combined principal greenway trail near the river's edge, serving pedestrian, bikes, wheelchairs, skates, etc. — all traveling with care, courtesy, and respect for others.
- A separate 8'-wide bike trail where space and anticipated riders allow it. The pedestrian trail can be reduced to 6' wide in these locations.
- A widened road lane on all roads paralleling the river so bikes and cars can share the road (the lane should be widened 4' and marked as a separate lane).
- A horse trail where space and demand allow, so horses can be separated from bikes and pedestrians, ideally by 25'.
- A principal 10'-wide greenway trail along at least one side of the entire river, crossing to other side at times.
- All roads paralleling the river should include a bike lane and a safe sidewalk (see *Trails and Streetscape* below).

Service Access

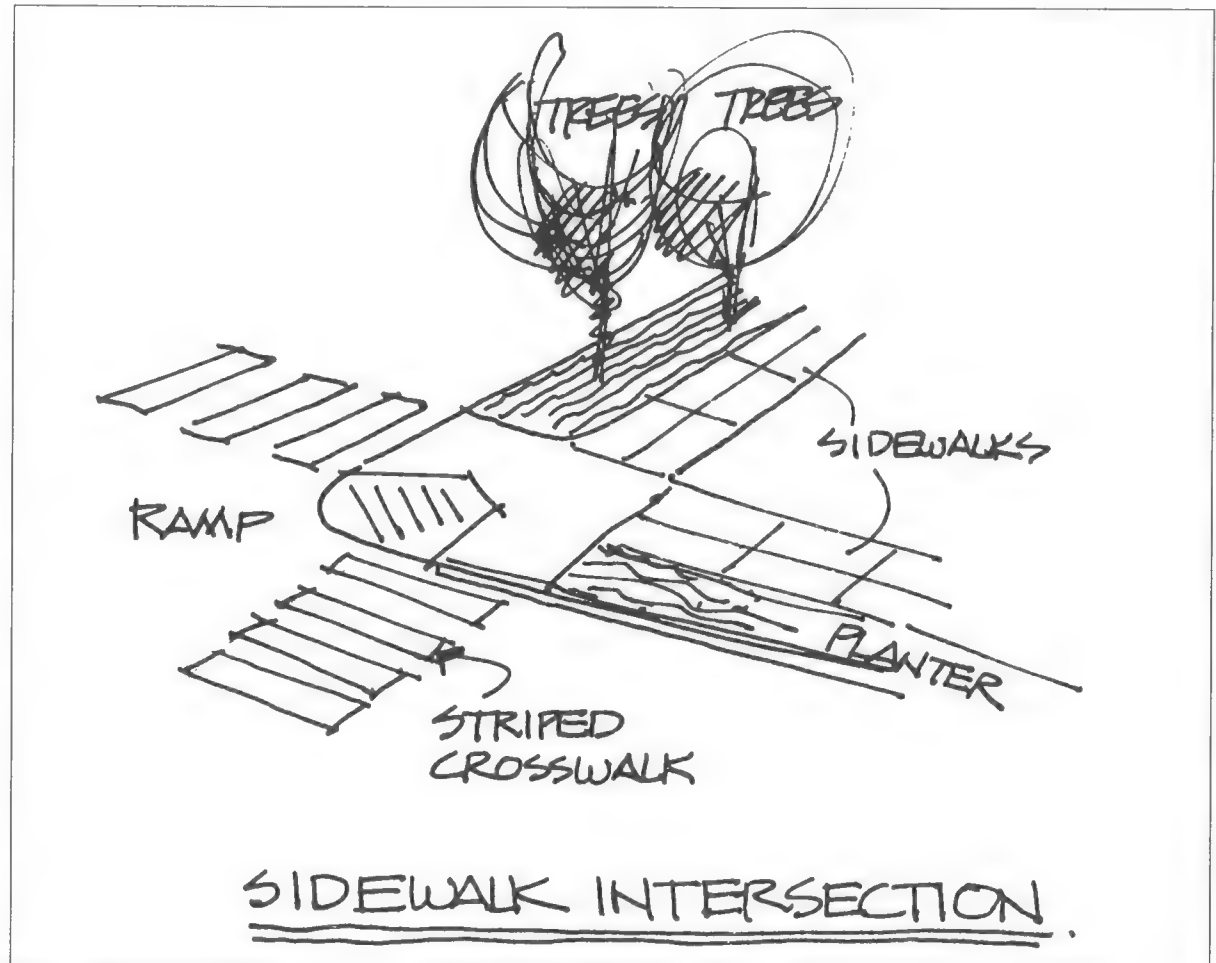
The principal greenway trail should be constructed so small service and emergency vehicles can travel its entire length. The trail should be a minimum of 10' wide, and constructed to a local road construction standard. To serve wheelchairs, its grade should be a maximum of 5%. Utilize

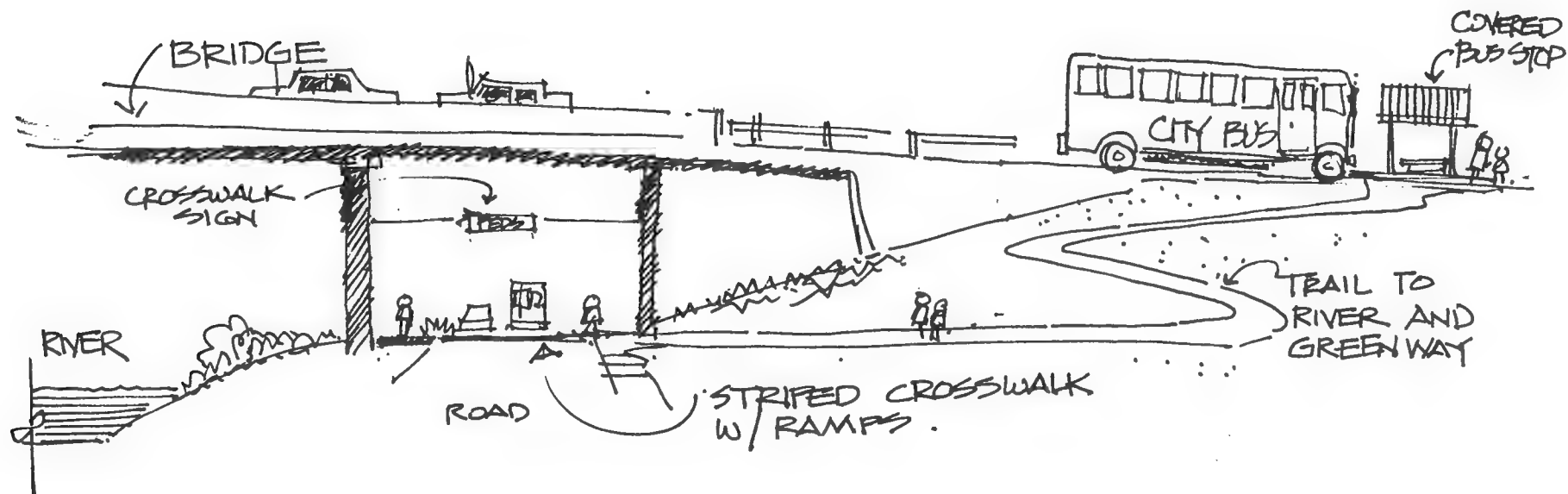
removable or drop bollards at street intersections to prevent unauthorized vehicle access. These structures offer a forum for artistic interpretation.

Trails and Streetscape

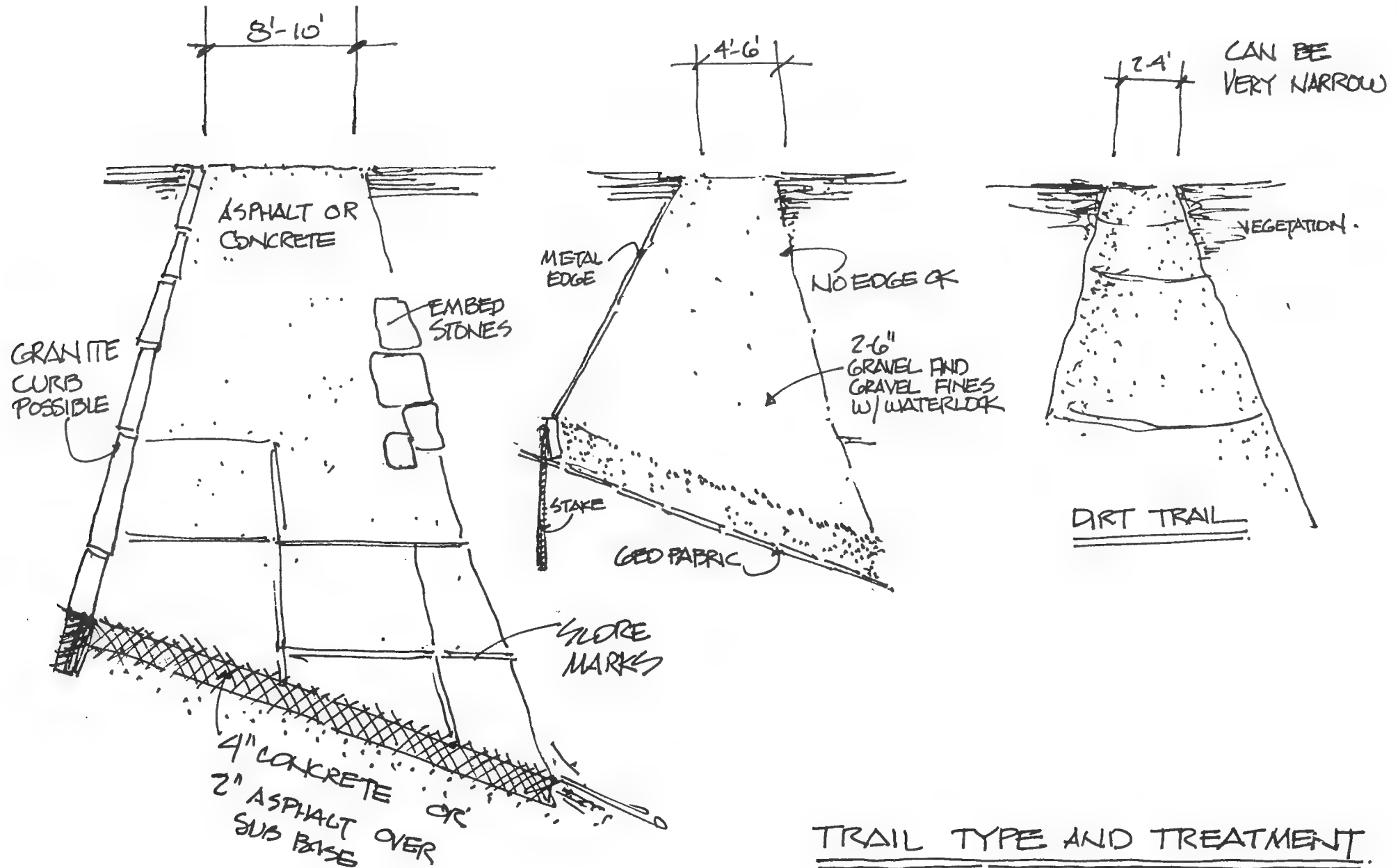
The Team refers readers to *The Streetscape Plan for Asheville*, for the details of streetscape design that is currently employed throughout the city. Additional comments

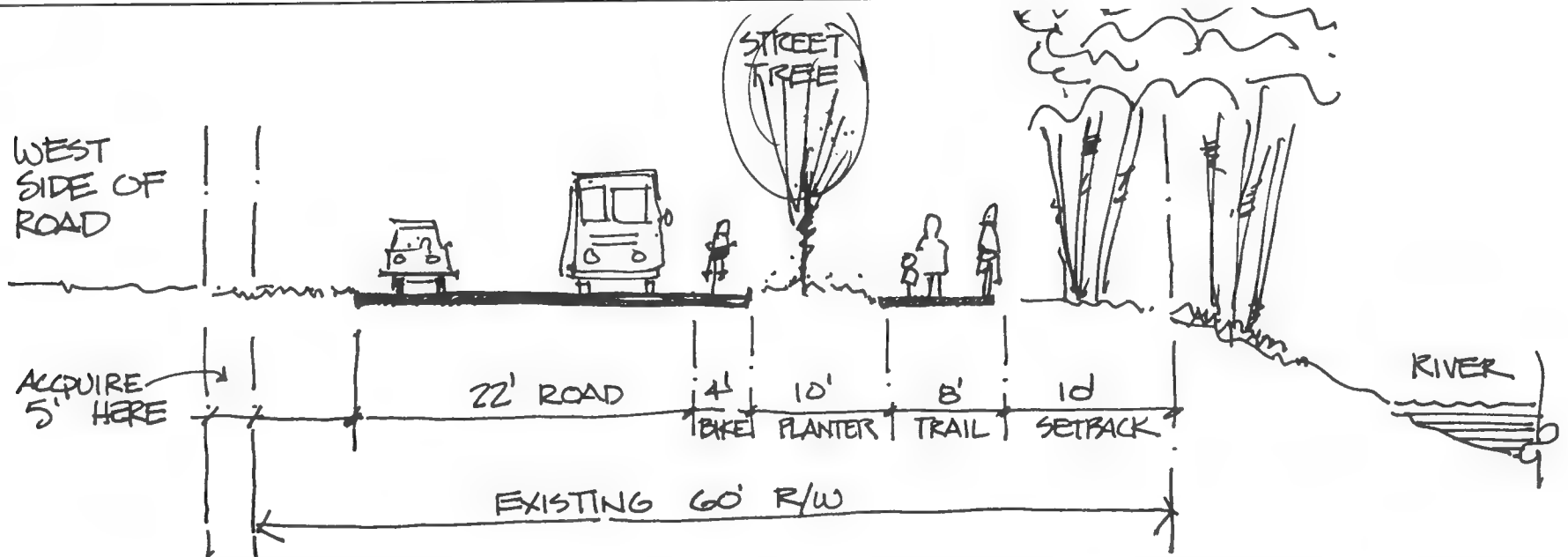
include: sidewalks should be widened to 8' where they intersect a trail; the trail should extend to all nearby bus stops as a safe, secure city sidewalk; sidewalks along all river roads should include a 10'-wide planter strip and should **not** be interrupted by driveways. Rather, the driveway should slope up to the sidewalk in the 10' planter space and then cross the sidewalk; drive-



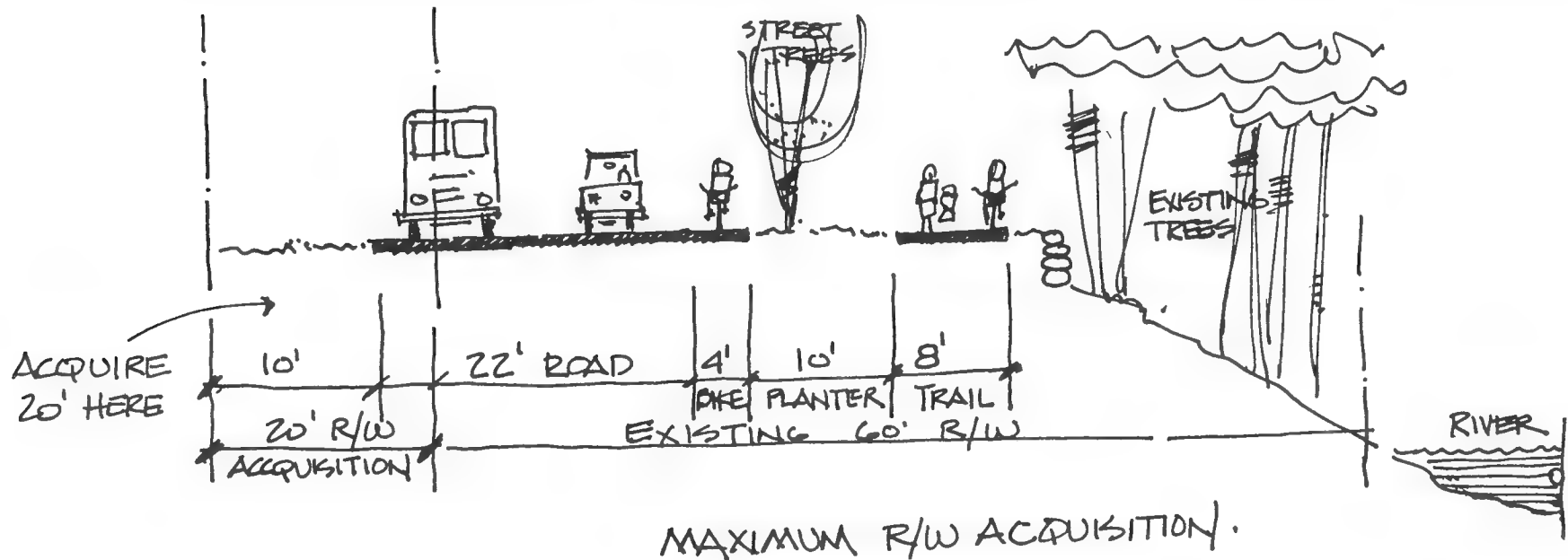


TRANSIT/TRAIL CONNECTION.
NO SCALE.





SECTIONS OF LYMAN STREET LOOKING SOUTH



way width should be reduced along the river roads where practical, to reduce the speed of entering or exiting vehicles.

Parking Lots

The Team recommends **very limited to no parking** within the greenway. This could be a controversial recommendation, since greenways will attract users. However, as the greenway extends into various neighborhoods, easy access on foot or bike will increase, and parking for those unable to reach it on foot can be dispersed. Furthermore, trail heads are likely to have existing surplus parking within easy walking distance — a church, school, or commercial lot that may be used during off-peak times, through negotiation with RiverLink or the City. Satellite parking may be available at the Norfolk-Southern Railroad property across from the Carrier Bridge. A new pedestrian bridge could be constructed parallel to the old bridge to ensure safe access to the trail on the east side of the river.

At some future time, it may be necessary to provide spot parking improvements. However, the Team stresses that parking lots should not be the first thing to greet users as they enter the greenway. When parking lots are mandated, they should be small — in size and in number of cars. Ten cars is the preferred maximum lot size, and spaces should be 8' wide with a total 50' perpendicular parking cross section (16' car space, 18' backout, 16' car space). Parking

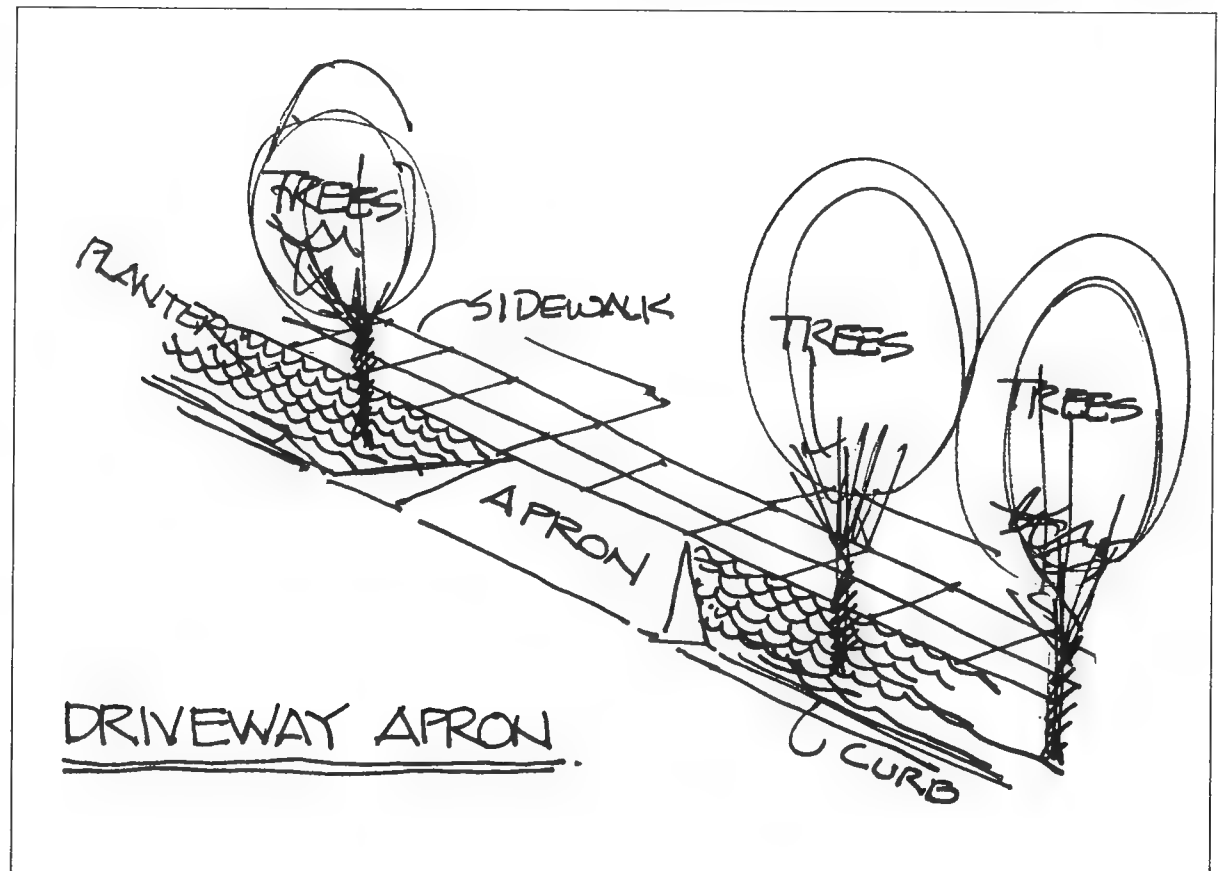
lots should be set back from the river a distance adequate for the trail to pass by. The lot should be buffered from the trail and from neighbors by large trees (5 trees per car minimum), and paving for all except the handicapped parking space should be gravel or a porous paving.

Recommendations for Lyman Street

The original Team recommended closing portions of Lyman Street to widen the

greenway. While this has many advantages to the greenway concept, it has met with considerable opposition from property owners for cost and convenience reasons. An alternative proposed by this Team is to acquire up to 20' of additional right-of-way or easement from the abutting west side properties, and modify the existing street to accommodate cars, trucks, pedestrians, and bicycles.

The street would retain its current 2-way 22' vehicular travel width, with a 4'-wide



extension for bicycles. A pedestrian zone would be constructed on the river (or west) side of the road — separated from the road by a 10'-wide planting strip. The sidewalk or trail should be 8' wide, and could meander slightly in the right-of-way. Benches and viewing areas could be constructed, and street crossings, bus stops, ramps, etc. installed according to other guidelines. The road should be reclassified a Parkway, instead of Truck Route. This classification would allow for all classes of vehicles, but would reduce the required street widths when the road is realigned.

Access and Services to the Physically Challenged

Asheville's mature and aging population fully supports the Team's belief that the entire greenway be accessible and usable to folks with walking or other impairments. To this end, all major trails should be constructed with a firm, hard, smooth, and permanent surface, to a maximum grade of 5% and with no steps. Ramps should be located at all street crossings or grade changes. Benches should be frequent, attractively located, and convenient. Lighting and crosswalk signs and markings should be at all street crossings. Special parking should be conveniently located at various trail heads. The Team recommends that special textures, plants with sweet smells, and other artful stimuli be located appropriately throughout the greenway to enhance the greenway experience for all users.

Steps/Ramps

Because greenways often travel across changes in grade, steps and ramps are important access features.

- Ramps should be promoted throughout the greenway for universal access.
- Steps could be used at grade changes along corridors that are not handicap accessible or could supplement nearby ramp access.
- Steps should be in character with trails and adjacent facilities.
- Steps should be easy to ascend and descend.
- Handrails should be provided for ramps and steps that exceed three risers.
- Steps can incorporate alternatives for seating.

Security Gates

A security gate system may be required to limit access to all but key parking areas within or adjacent to the greenway from sundown to sunup. This system could be a universal design much like standard forest service designs. Gates offer an excellent opportunity for artistic interpretation.

Bridge Crossings

Existing high bridge supports provide opportunities for artistic interpretation and/or can blend with the greenway character, by use of indigenous materials. Additionally, these supports offer the potential for attaching pedestrian and bicycle walkways across the river.

Floodplain Management

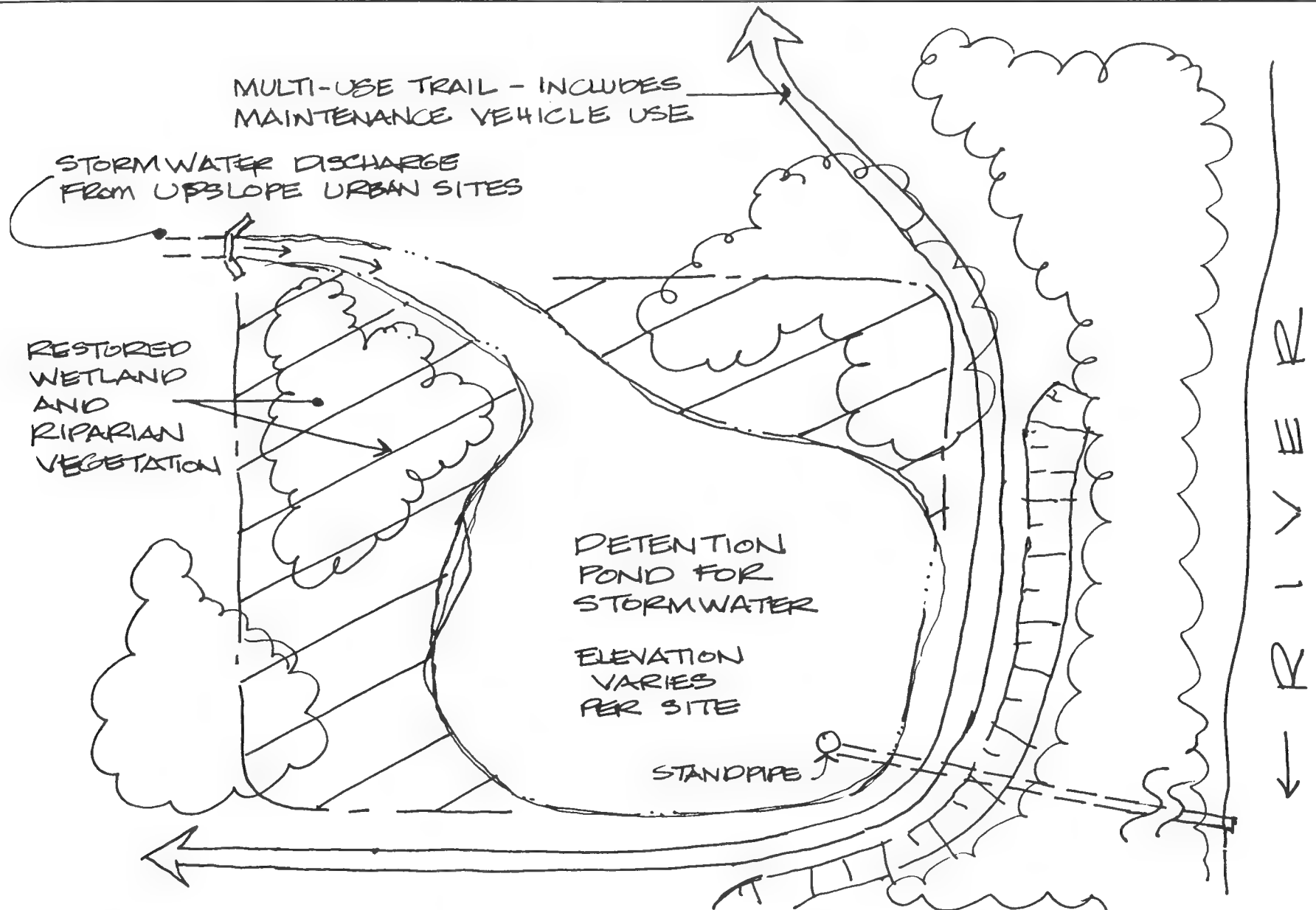
Floodplain management is a recent development in the City of Asheville. Histori-

cally, many different types of land use have occurred and are currently allowed to occur along the river corridors that are harmful to the function of the greenway system as an environmental benefit.

Two floodplain management objectives must become clear to residents of the community:

- In order to enjoy the benefits of riverfront greenway development, a fundamental change in attitude must occur among the land owners along the French Broad and Swannanoa River floodplains and the governing bodies that regulate land use throughout the city and county.
- The city and county must begin to implement a comprehensive and systematic approach to water quality management in order to maximize the river corridors as an economic asset. This approach should involve the re-establishment of riparian floodway and floodplain lands along the rivers' edge. This policy will help the city to meet new water quality standards of the Clean Water Act for Non-Point Discharge Elimination within urban areas of the French Broad River watershed.

Proper floodplain management can be supported by active and progressive greenway development. Greenway lands should be as diverse as possible — from river edge to urban edge — in order to accommodate a broad range of cultural and environmental uses. "Soft engineering" should be employed to facilitate overland and channelized storm water flow from upslope landscapes to floodplain lands.



FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT - A B.M.P.

NO SCALE

Private and public landholdings should be encouraged to install appropriate Best Management Practices in the floodplain. These BMPs include the installation of detention ponds, wetland vegetation, and broad areas of floodplain vegetation to dissipate and absorb the toxic substances contained within surface stormwater.

Asheville should not give up on its river and allow sub-standard water quality and degraded riverfront landscapes to become the accepted norm. Numerous other communities throughout the country have successfully reclaimed their riverfront or waterfront landscapes, turning these into economically viable and self-sustaining land use components of the community.

Slope Stabilization

The Team recognizes that some new greenway facilities will have to be developed on cut and fill slopes. In addition, the greenway, as a land use, can serve to stabilize existing eroding slopes, disturbed landscapes, and other existing land uses not compatible with floodplains of the river corridors.

Slope stabilization of disturbed sites should employ the use of “soft engineering” methods, such as plant materials and indigenous hard surface materials, instead of traditional “hard engineering,” i.e. use of hard-faced walls or intentionally placed quarry rock (rip-rap) to prevent erosion. Geotextile fabrics should be used to immediately stabilize soil mass of cut and fill slopes. Native vegetation should be used to stabilize disturbed areas.

The net effect of slope stabilization should encourage a blending of undisturbed landscapes with disturbed landscapes to the greatest extent possible.

Traditional Western North Carolina grading patterns — abrupt leveling, steeply sloped cuts or fills, and hard engineering solutions to storm runoff — should be abandoned. The greenway development should exemplify a new attitude toward landform alteration and disturbance.

Overland flow of stormwater should be directed into broad planted swales (soft engineering) instead of being channelized and carried directly to the river channel through pipes, catch basins, and outlet structures (hard engineering).

Plantscaping

Plantscaping involves the installation and/or maintenance of new and existing plant materials. The greenway should use native plant materials to stabilize disturbed landscapes, improve the function of floodplain land, screen and buffer adjacent land uses, and improve the aesthetic condition of greenway lands whenever possible.

The Team recommends that “advance urban forestry practice” — the purposeful shaping of native plant materials — be used to open views to the river from adjacent roadways, trails, and residential, commercial, or industrial buildings.

Particular attention should be paid to the restoration and expansion of the riparian wetland zone characteristically adjacent to the river edge in completing greenway plantscaping.

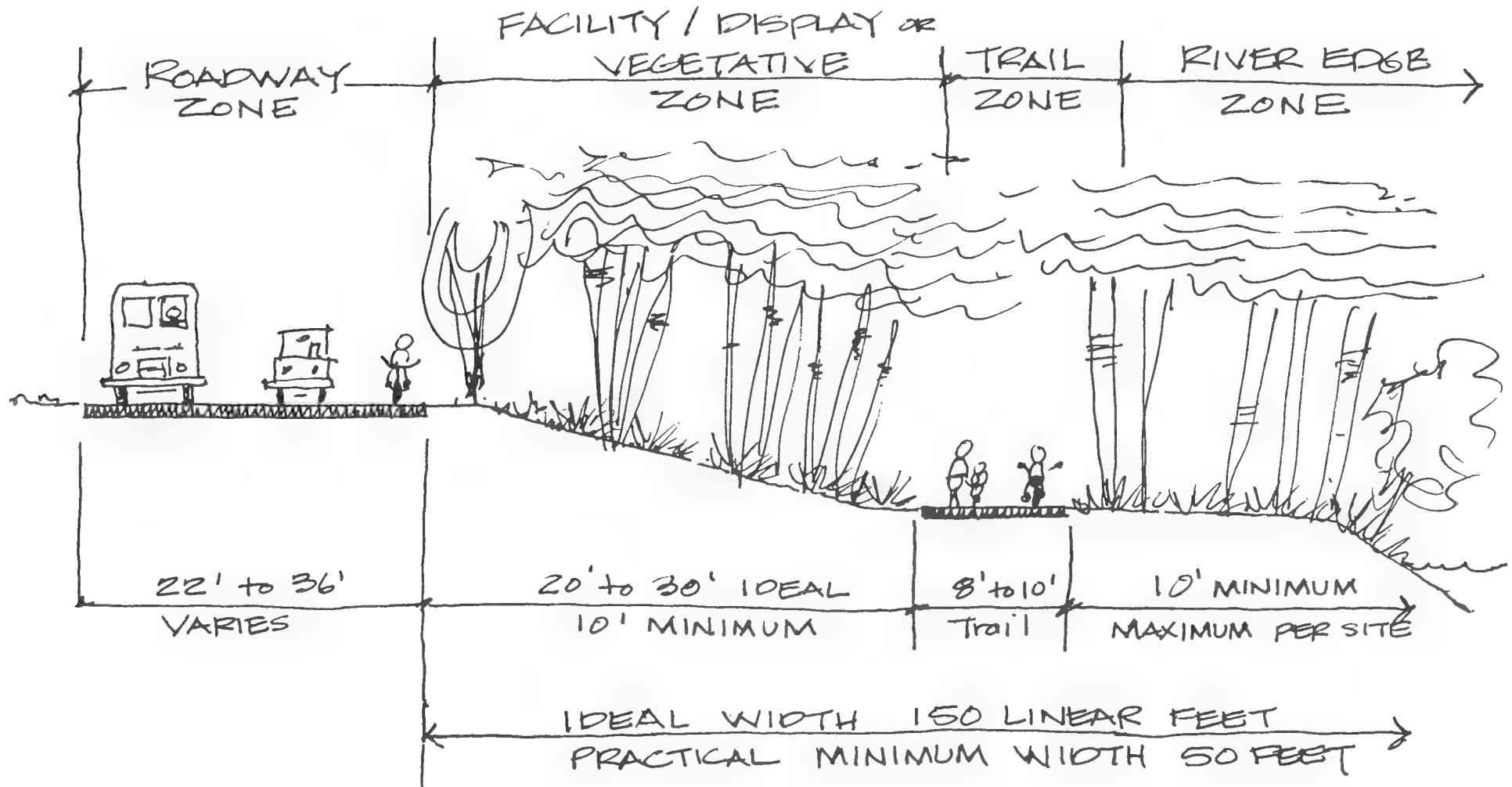
Plantscaping should be accomplished with diverse species and varying size of plants to provide seasonal flowering and fall foliage, accent and beauty, and to enrich the aesthetic appeal of the greenway. Plants should be used to buffer adjacent land uses from portions of the greenway. Sound can be absorbed by trees, shrubs, and ground covers, creating a quiet and serene landscape. Plants also maintain cool and sheltered landscapes, protecting users from heat and prolonged exposure to sunlight and cold winter winds.

Conclusion

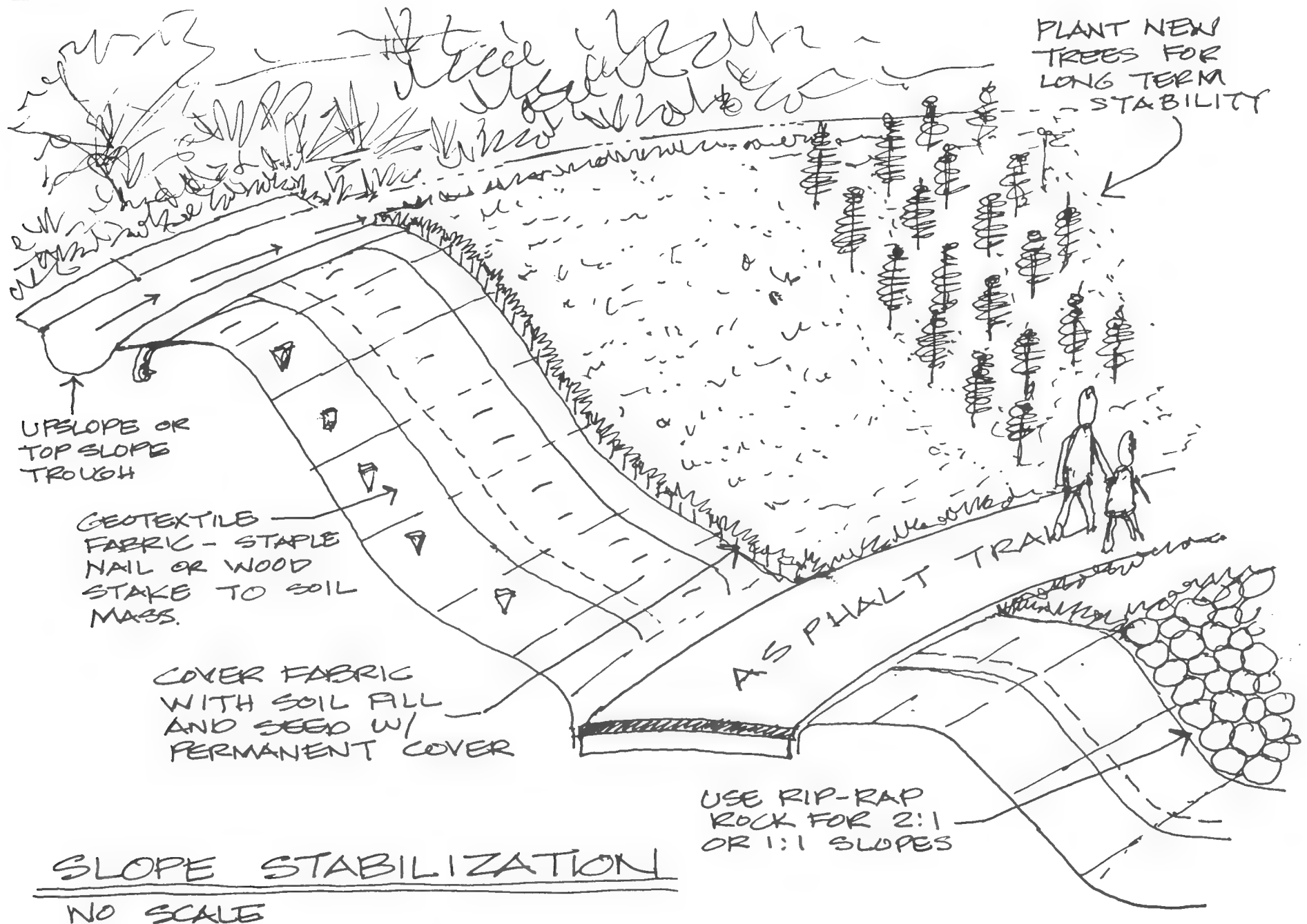
Work associated with access and environmental improvement throughout the greenway system would be carried out through both short-term and long-term efforts. Immediate improvements would include the construction of a 10'-wide trail through all existing city-owned property along the rivers and the improvement and widening of existing streets to include bike and pedestrian routes.

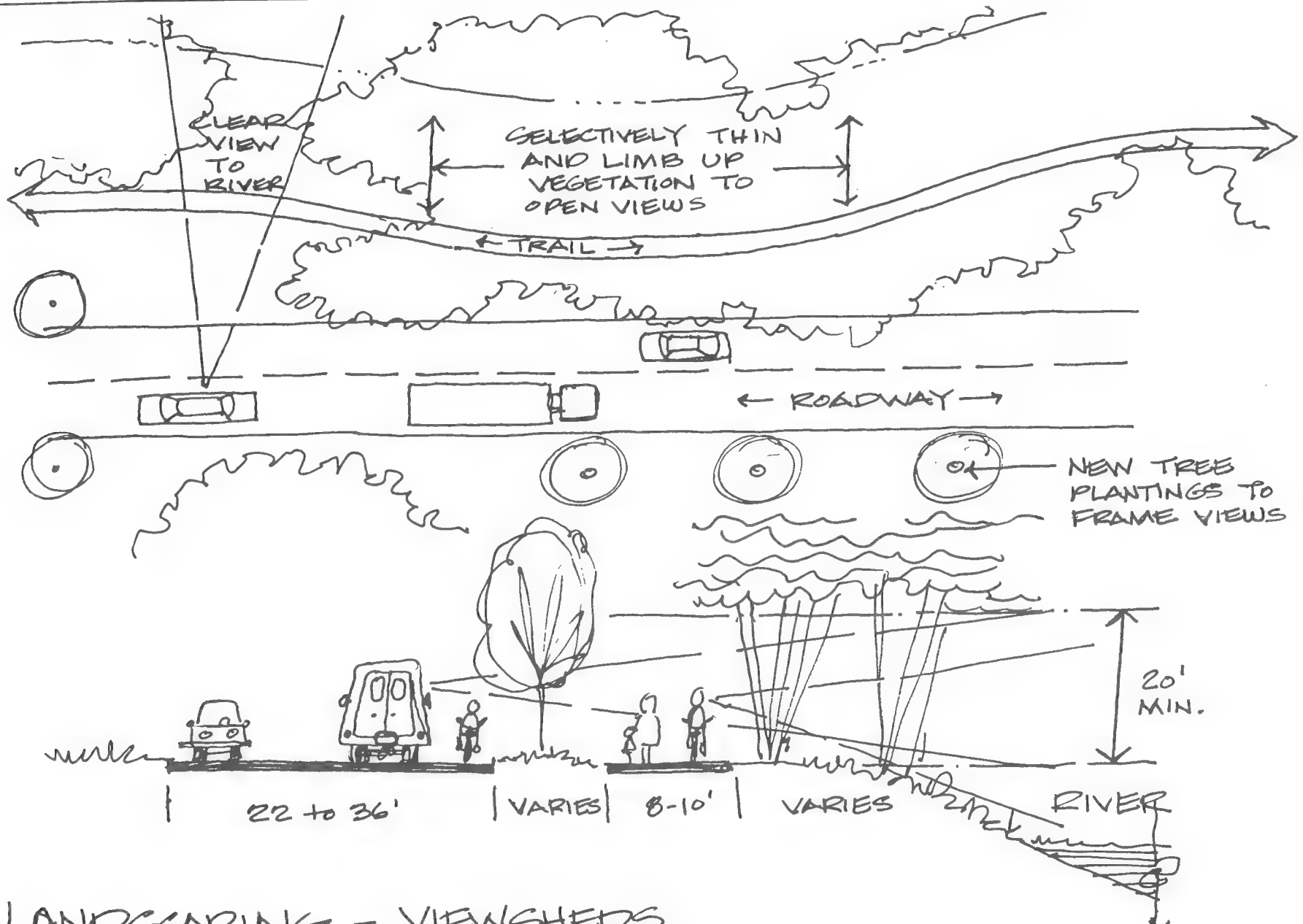
Intermediate actions include adding sidewalks, acquisition of additional public lands or easements, embellishing the trails with benches, art, plantings, and connections to adjacent neighborhoods.

Long-term improvements include land use adjustment to reduce pollution, development of flood water storage and stormwater cleansing areas, programs that foster upgrading the visual quality of the river corridors and encourage quality economic growth.



FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT - GREENWAY WIDTH
NO SCALE





LANDSCAPING - VIEWSHEDS

NO SCALE

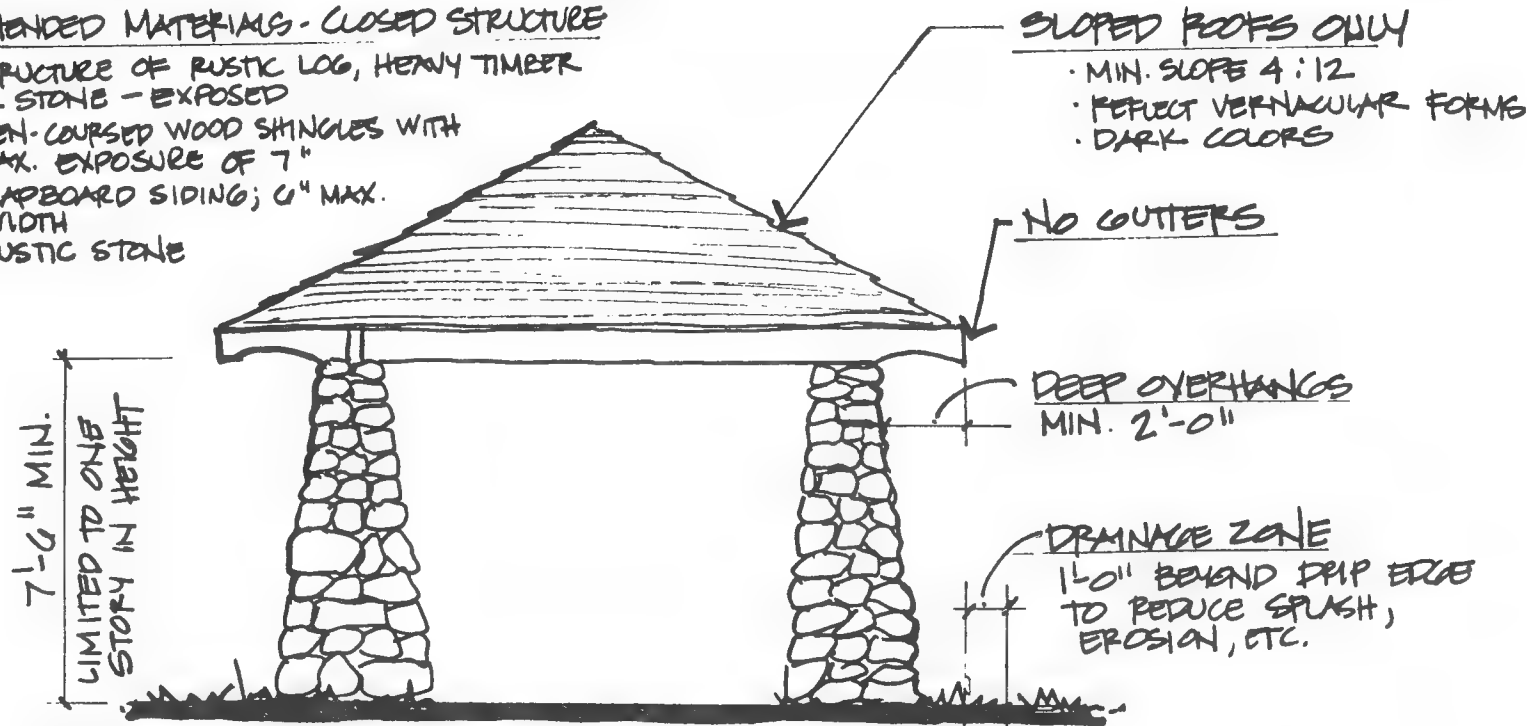
Structures and Facilities

RECOMMENDED MATERIALS - OPEN STRUCTURE

- RUSTIC LOG
- HEAVY TIMBER
- RUSTIC STONE (i.e. RIVER ROCK, ROUGH CUT... NOT SMOOTH FACED)

RECOMMENDED MATERIALS - CLOSED STRUCTURE

- STRUCTURE OF RUSTIC LOG, HEAVY TIMBER OR STONE - EXPOSED
- EVEN-COURSED WOOD SHINGLES WITH MAX. EXPOSURE OF 7"
- CLAPBOARD SIDING; 6" MAX. WIDTH
- RUSTIC STONE



ENCLOSED STRUCTURES

- SHOULD HAVE A FEELING OF OPENNESS
- SHOULD HAVE EXPOSED STRUCTURAL SYSTEM
- SHALL NOT HAVE RECESSED DOORWAYS
- SHOULD INCORPORATE DAYLIGHT + GOOD VENTILATION

IN RARE CONTEXTUAL INSTANCES
WITHIN THE URBAN CORRIDOR
BRICK MAY BE AN APPROPRIATE
STRUCTURAL MATERIAL AT THE
URBAN EDGE

STRUCTURES GENERAL GUIDELINES

Structures and Facilities Team:

Kevin Hogan, MFA; Al Kopf, ASLA;
Jane Gianvito Mathews, AIA; Luther E.
Smith, ASLA.

Structures

Structures within the greenway serve vital recreational and maintenance requirements. Depending on the intended use and location within the floodplain, their design can be open or closed. Some considerations for structures include:

- *Limited to one story in height.* Small scale structures would create less visual impact and allow the natural scenery to dominate the setting.
- *Eaves at a minimum of 7'-6" above grade.* This minimum height would reduce potential vandalism.
- *Deep roof overhangs are required* — minimum of 2'-0". Roof overhangs are designed for proper drainage and aesthetics.
- *Roofs shall be sloped* — no flat roofs allowed. This is for aesthetic as well as functional reasons. Sloped roofs can deter climbing and the collection of debris.
 - roofs shall be dark in color
 - minimum slope of 4:12
 - reflect vernacular forms
- *No gutters; provide drainage around building* — gutters can attract vandalism.
- *Siting of structures*
 - open structures in floodway or flood fringe.
 - closed structures **only** in floodfringe.

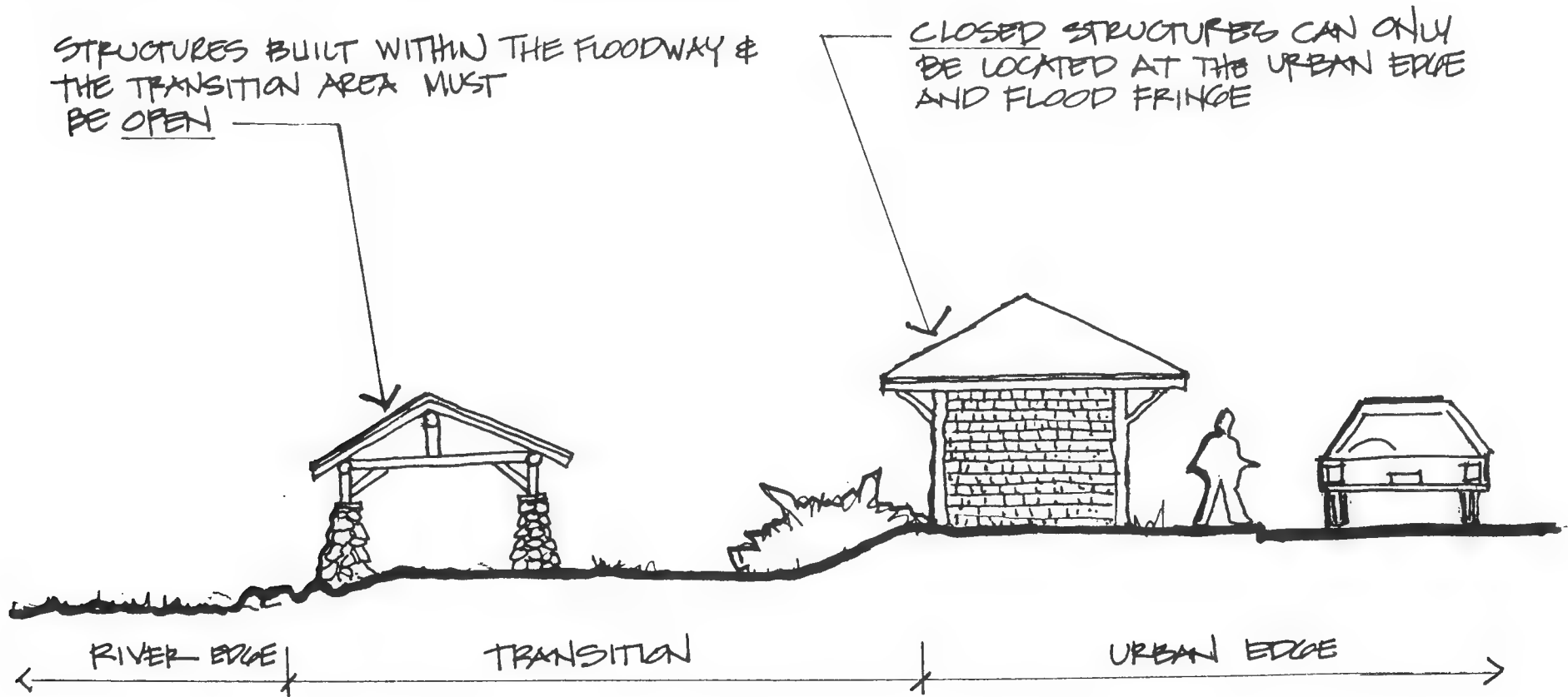
- structures for large group use should have a focal point siting.
- *Open Structures* — recommended materials. (These materials reflect Asheville's historic architecture and traditional park design.)
 - rustic log
 - heavy timber
 - rustic stone
- *Closed Structures* — recommended materials.
 - structure exposed: rustic log, heavy timber, or rustic stone
 - siding: even-coursed shingles with a maximum exposure of 7" or clapboard siding with a maximum width of 6"
 - rustic stone
 - in rare contextual instances within the urban corridor, brick may be an appropriate structural material at the urban edge of the river
- *Enclosed structures should have a feeling of openness.* The structure's design should closely link the outdoor with the indoor environment to foster the natural setting's experience as much as possible.
- *Enclosed structures shall not have deeply recessed doorways.* Recessed areas are often soiled by vandals.
- *Design of service structures.* Service buildings should be unobtrusive, yet functional, within the setting because they do not enhance the user's experience.
 - located primarily at the urban or developed edge for vehicular access.
 - distributed throughout the greenway, only when they are necessary.

- blend into the landscape visually through use of materials, color, and plantings.
- *Public amenities* should be located and concentrated at the confluence of vehicular and pedestrian traffic and activities. Amenities such as rest rooms and telephones should be located at trail heads or trail confluences for convenience.
- *Principal public structures* include frequent and intense functions that are interrelated. These structures should allow for multiple uses and be located near the urban edge of the greenway. By consolidating multiple uses within a single structure, the visitor's experience is enhanced in terms of use and appearance. This location would be optimum for use, security, and maintenance.
- *Toilets should be located near public right-of-ways.*
- *Rest rooms should incorporate natural light and ventilation.* This will not only improve the health and appearance of the structure by bringing the "outdoors" to the interior space, but will promote energy conservation.

Fishing Points

In order to be sensitive to the recreational needs of fishermen, various factors must be considered when designing and locating fishing areas:

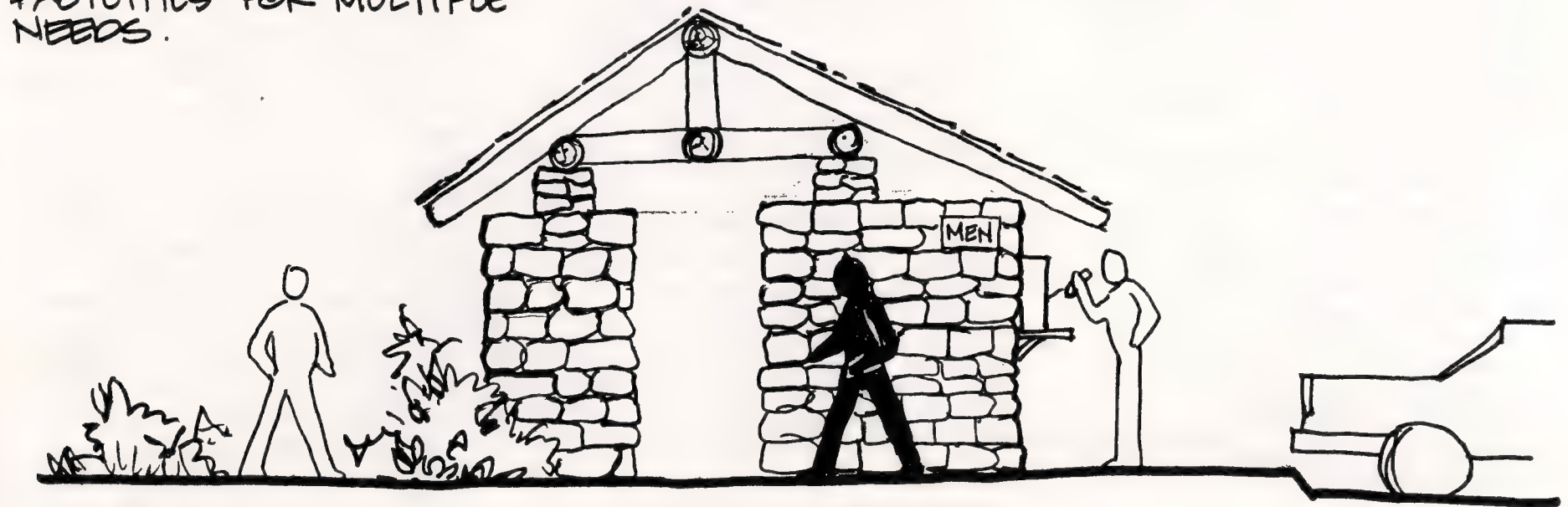
- *Locations based on historical use patterns.* These often relate to the best areas to catch fish.
- *Adequate clearance for casting.* This would minimize casting accidents and tanglements.



SITING OF STRUCTURES

- AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE MAKE USE OF NATURAL LIGHT AND VENTILATION
- PRINCIPLE PUBLIC STRUCTURES WITH HIGH FREQUENCY OF USE SHOULD INCORPORATE FACILITIES FOR MULTIPLE NEEDS.

- PUBLIC AMENITIES (REST ROOMS, PHONES, ETC.) SHALL BE LOCATED AND CONCENTRATED AT THE "CONFLUENCE" OF VEHICULAR AND PEDESTRIAN TRAFFIC
- LOCATE ADJACENT TO THOROUGHFARES FOR SECURITY, MAINTENANCE, AND ACCESS TO UTILITY HOOKUP



← TRANSITION | URBAN EDGE →

RESTROOMS

- *Floor area provides sure footing.* This is important because fishing requires movement, often on wet surfaces.
- *Accommodate fish cleaning.* This should be located away from fishing area, for fishing as well as public health reasons.
- *Provide nearby trash receptacle.* Receptacles are a necessary amenity to keep the immediate site clean and safe.
- *Provide interpretive exhibits.* Exhibits at these strategic locations would add more meaning to the fishermen's experience.
- *Visual identity.* The fishing point should promote visibility, for security reasons, but also some privacy to enhance the fishing experience.
- *Clear, safe, stable access.* For the welfare of the handicapped as well as non-handicapped user.
- *Provide for limited number of users* at each point. This would enhance the fisherman's experience outdoors.
- *Accommodate traditional fishing time elements and practices.* These times would foster fishing, yet need to be in accordance with adequate security.
- *Normally located above normal high water marks.* The elevation of the fishing area would influence its use and safety.

Boat Access

Boating in its various forms along the river requires appropriate access for craft launching and take-out. Access can entail formal ramps that accommodate vehicular access and informal access points that accommodate transitory users interested in "camping" along the river bank while en route.

Formal Access Characteristics:

- *Protection from river's direct current.* This would facilitate the launching and removal of boats.
- *Should accommodate a variety of vehicle types.* Access to the broadest range of vehicles is important.
- *Trash receptacles.* An amenity to keep the site clean.
- *Permanent structure with minimum height above ground level.* The structure should be unobtrusive in the landscape setting.
- *Controlled area.* Access points should avoid conflicts with other park activities.
- *Adjacent to vehicle access* and near parking areas. The area should be easily accessible for safety and convenience.

Transitory Access Characteristics:

- *Low key/impact design.* The access point should not be visually obtrusive.
- *Associated with camping and/or picnic shelter area.* The area should have amenities that support the user's interests and needs.
- *Protection from river's direct current.* This would facilitate the launching and removal of boats.
- *Easy to descend or ascend* with a portable boat.

Bridges and Water Crossings

Bridges are important structures that are required to safely extend the movement of pedestrians and vehicles over water and depressed land features. Because the applications and concept of bridges vary, it is important to consider:

- *Historical crossing types* in the region. Consider the variety of bridges traditionally used in the region.
- *Required uses*, i.e. pedestrian, vehicle, bicycle. The bridge should be designed for every anticipated means of transportation across the river.
- *Harmonious relationship to setting.* The design and materials of the bridge should complement the bridge's natural context and be human in scale.
- *Grade line or stream level or elevated designs in appropriate situations.* The elevation of the crossing should consider the natural setting and the corridor's location.

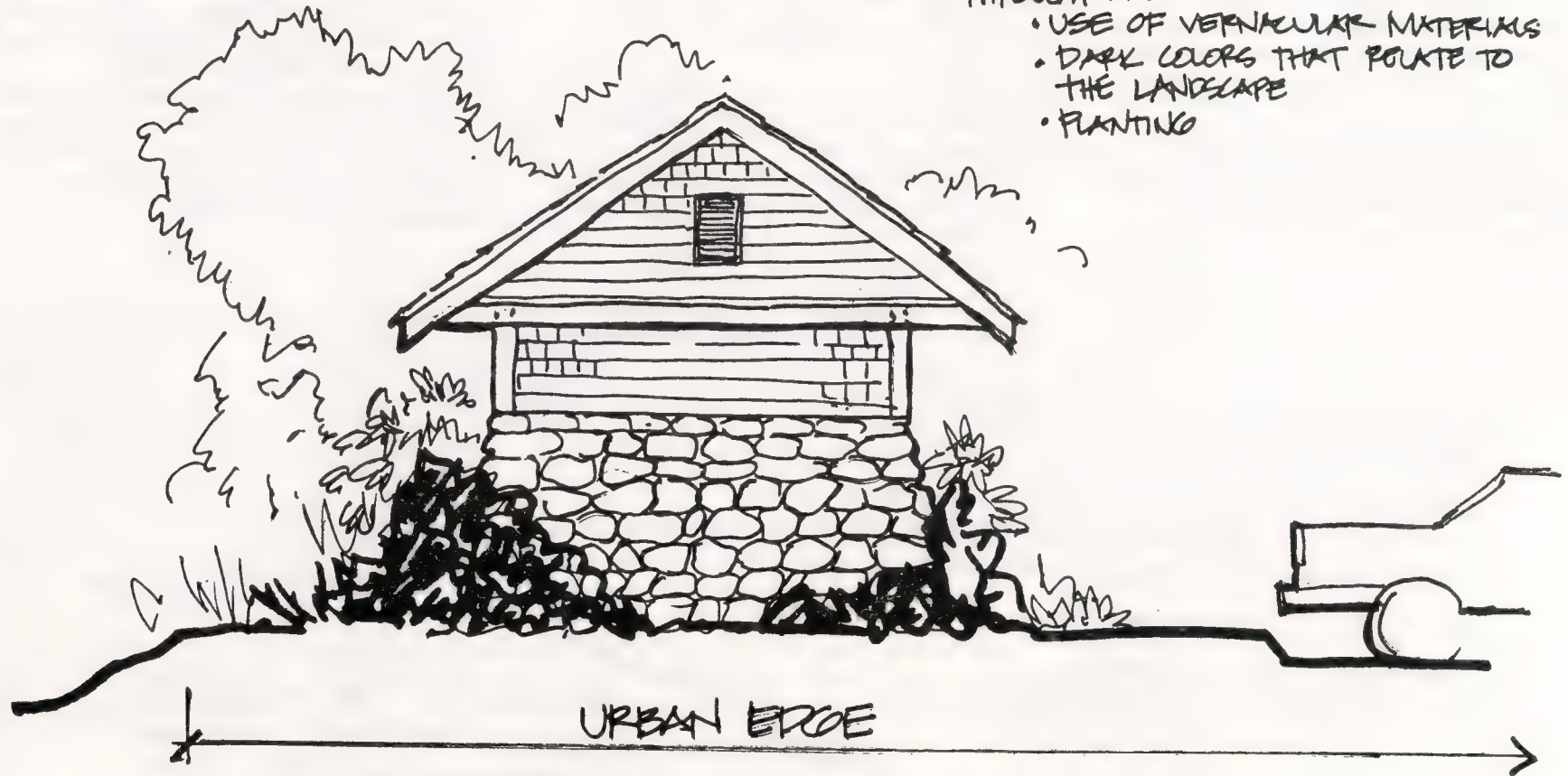
Seating

Comfortable and strategic seating should be incorporated in designs that are expressly intended for sitting, such as benches and swings, as well as less formal applications such as rock outcroppings, fallen logs, slopes, and tops of low walls. Some considerations for seating include:

- *Seating should be located along pedestrian corridors* but out of the flow of traffic. This avoids potential conflicts between active and passive uses.
- *The seat should be about 17" high* with wood slats for thermal comfort and drainage.
- *Seating should be made out of indigenous materials.* Seating design should be sensitive to the context of the site.
- *Integrate seating with other site elements.* This would promote strategically siting seating near complementary uses.

- REDUCE THEIR VISUAL IMPACT ON THE NATURAL LANDSCAPE
- DISTRIBUTED THROUGHOUT THE GREENWAY SYSTEM

- LOCATED AT URBAN EDGES FOR EASY VEHICULAR ACCESS
- BLEND STRUCTURE INTO LANDSCAPE THROUGH
 - USE OF VERNACULAR MATERIALS
 - DARK COLORS THAT RELATE TO THE LANDSCAPE
 - PLANTING



SERVICE STRUCTURES

- *Seating should be developed in strategic locations.* This would include settings with views, shade, rest spot intervals, confluence points, interpretation areas, and relevant activities.

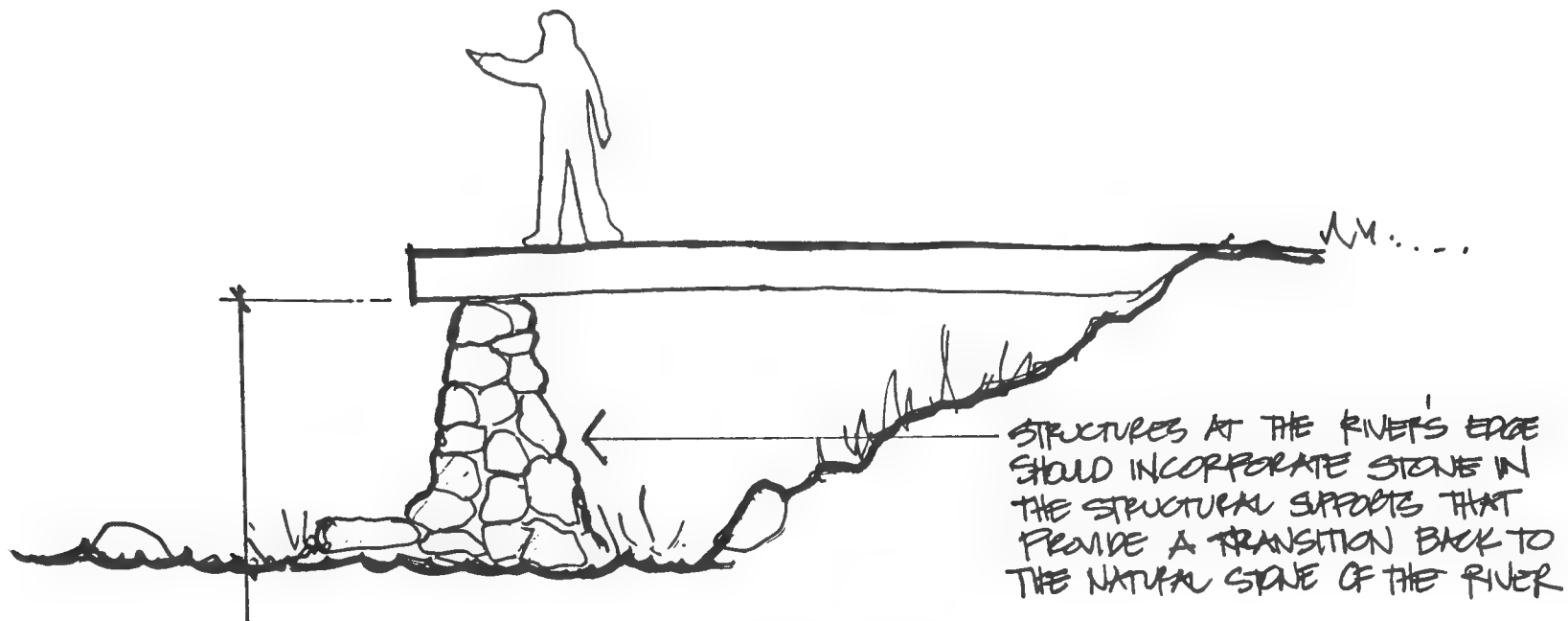
Barriers

Barriers can be visual, physical, environmental, and sensory impediments. They can serve a variety of functions, such as addressing grade changes and slope stabilization, traffic control (pedestrian and vehicular), views, noise control, separation

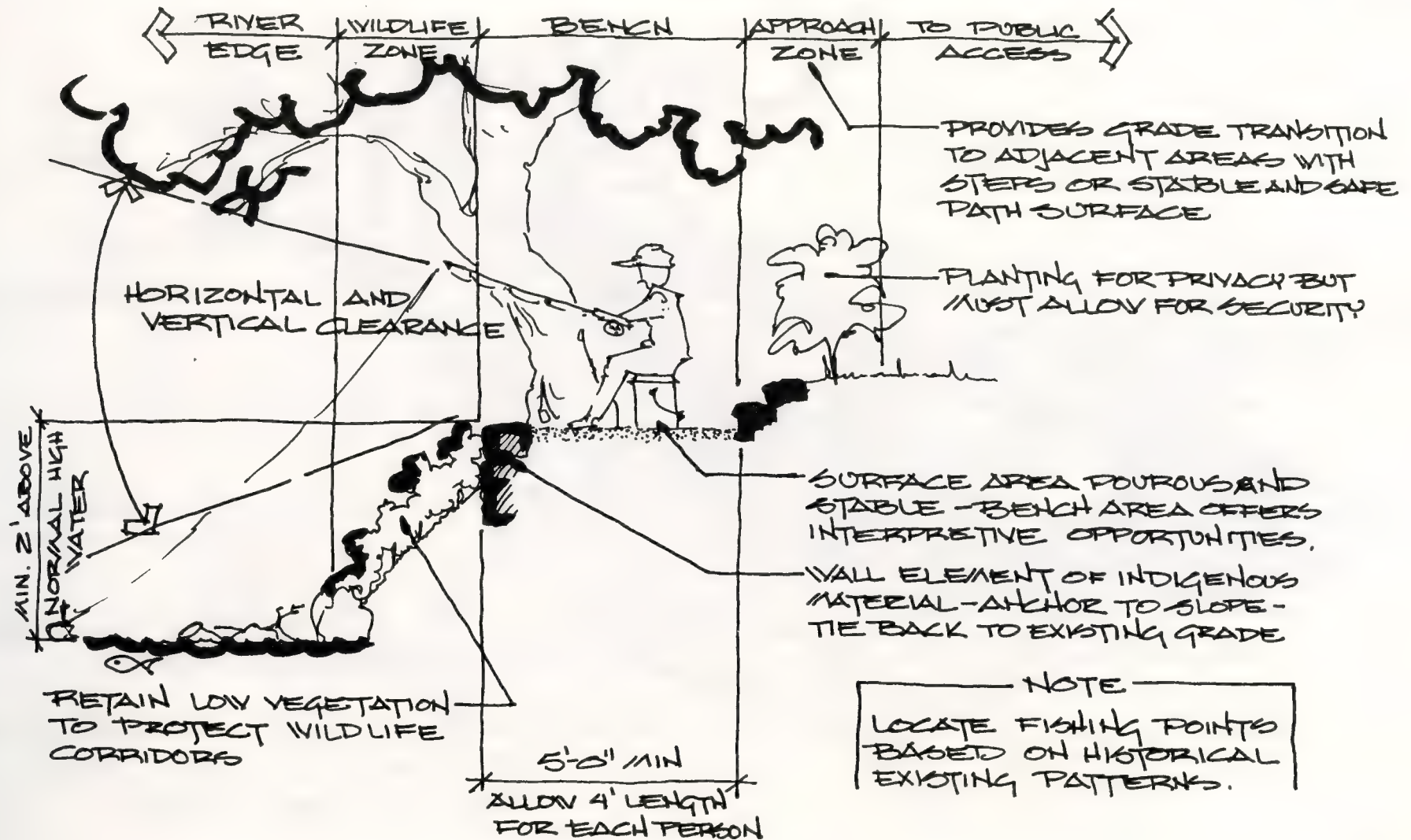
and protection, and safety features. Barriers can appear as walls, fences, railings, bollards, and vegetation. Barriers should be:

- *Responsive to wildlife.* It is important to maintain adequate wildlife movement corridors.
- *Sensitive to views.* Barriers should complement the setting and enhance it wherever possible.
- *Designed in human scale.* Barriers should not be monumental in the landscape.

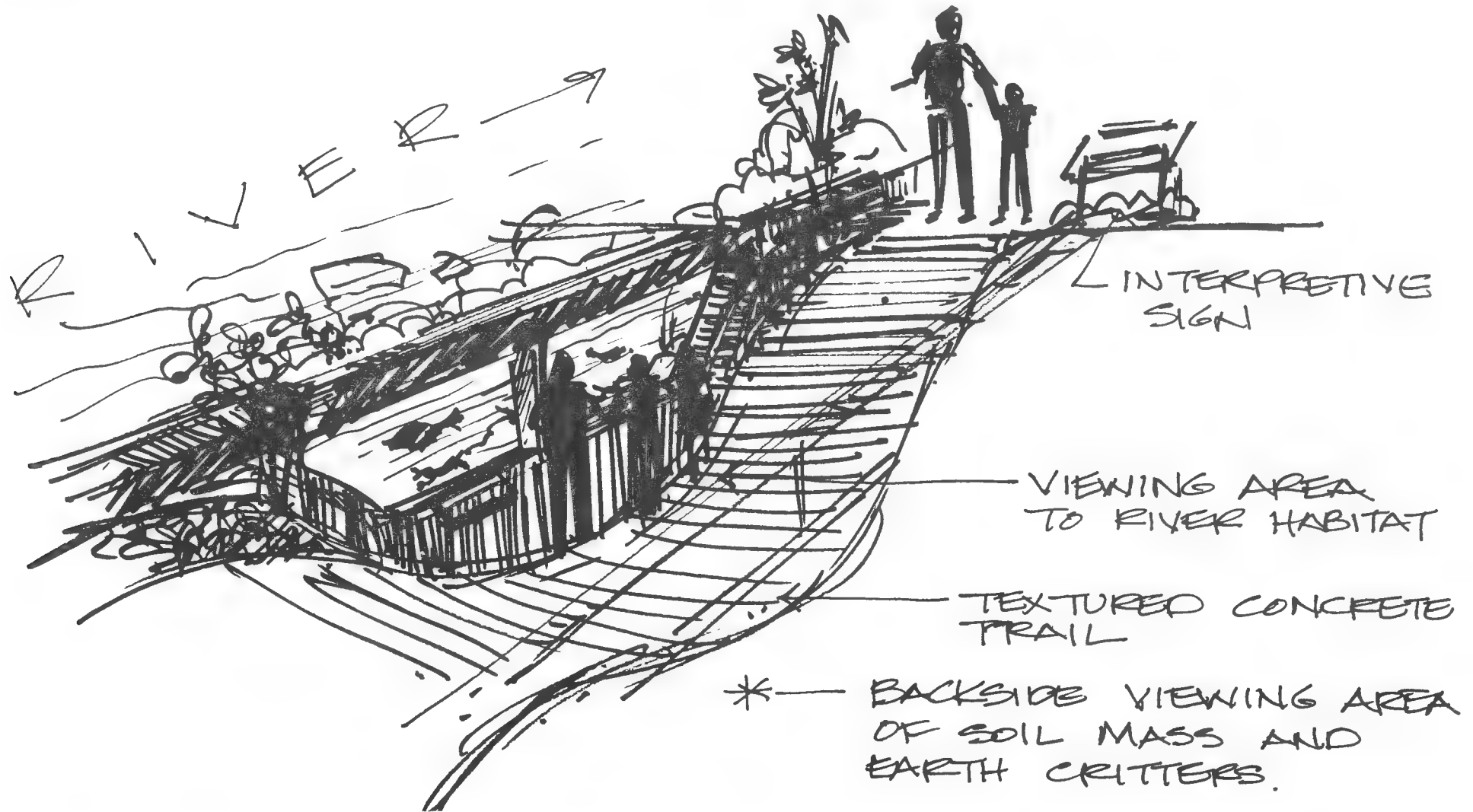
- *Highly flood proof.* Permanent barriers should sustain common flood damage, especially along the river's edge.
- *Low maintenance.* Barriers should be durable in design and material.
- *Reflect the river's edge, transition area, and urban edge.* This should be achieved in character and materials.
- *Serve multiple purposes where appropriate.* Barriers could serve as seating and interpretive uses, as well as more functional uses such as retaining earth or impeding movement.



RIVER EDGE STRUCTURES

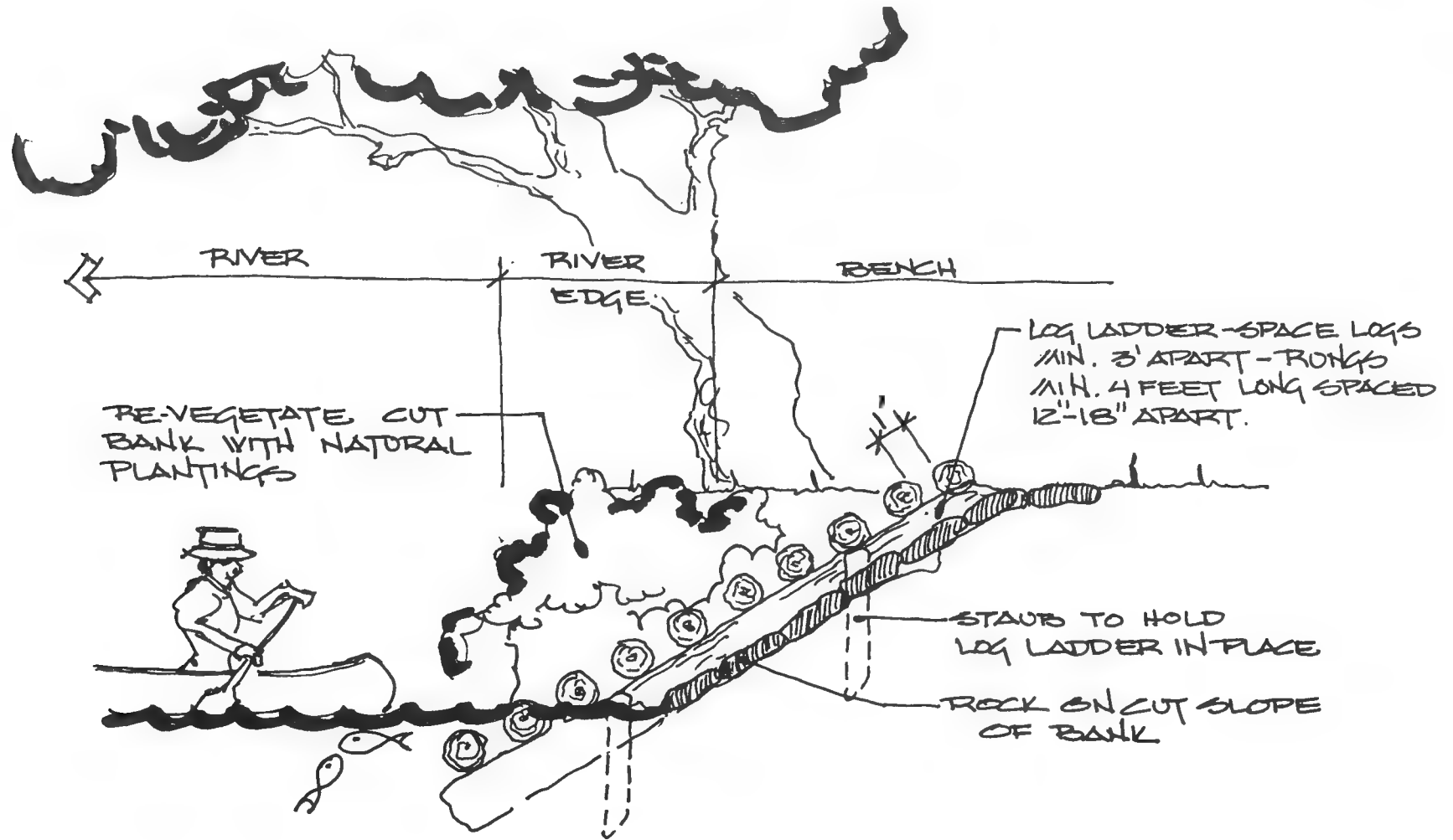


FISHING POINT

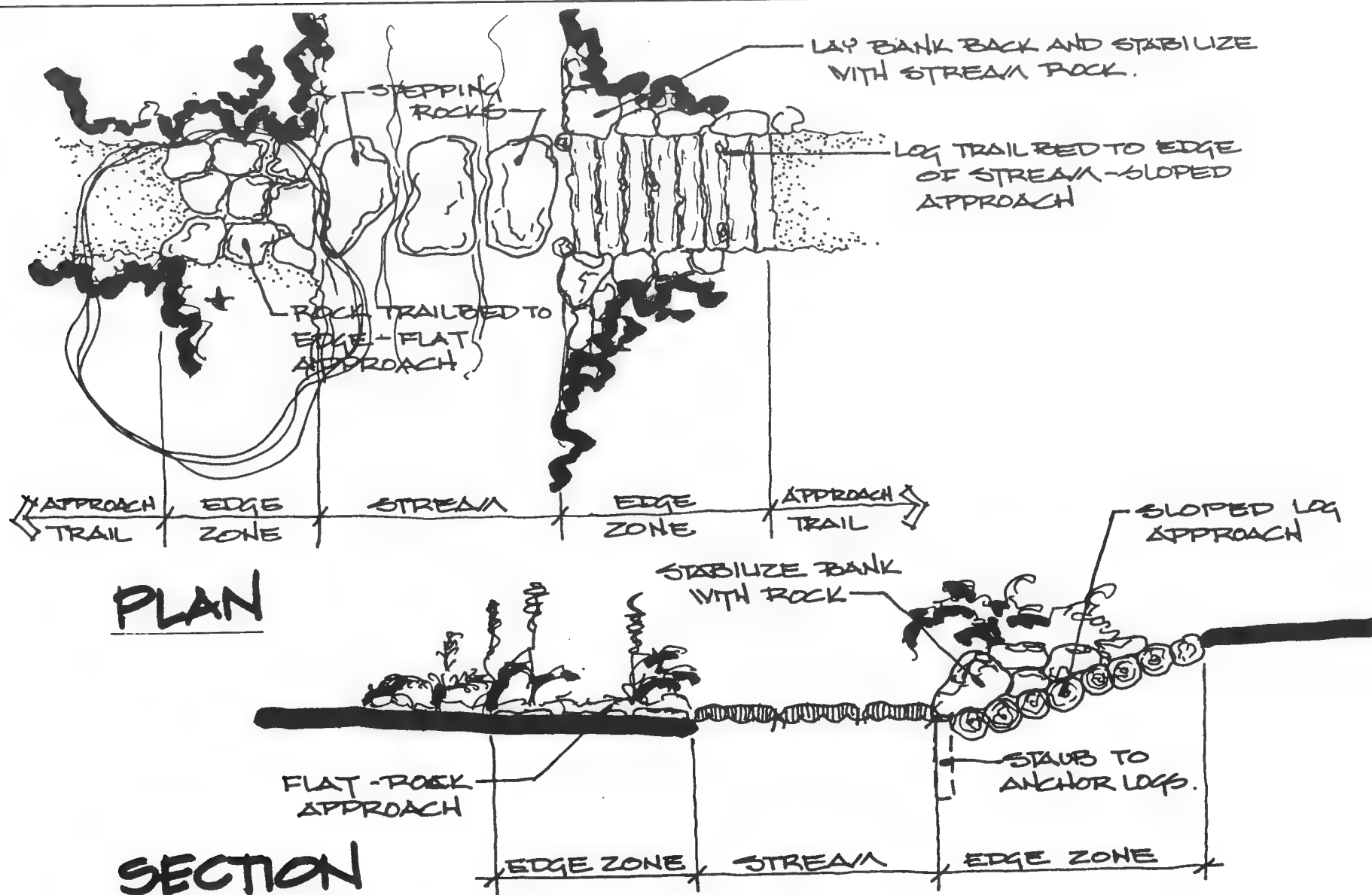


FISH OBSERVATORY

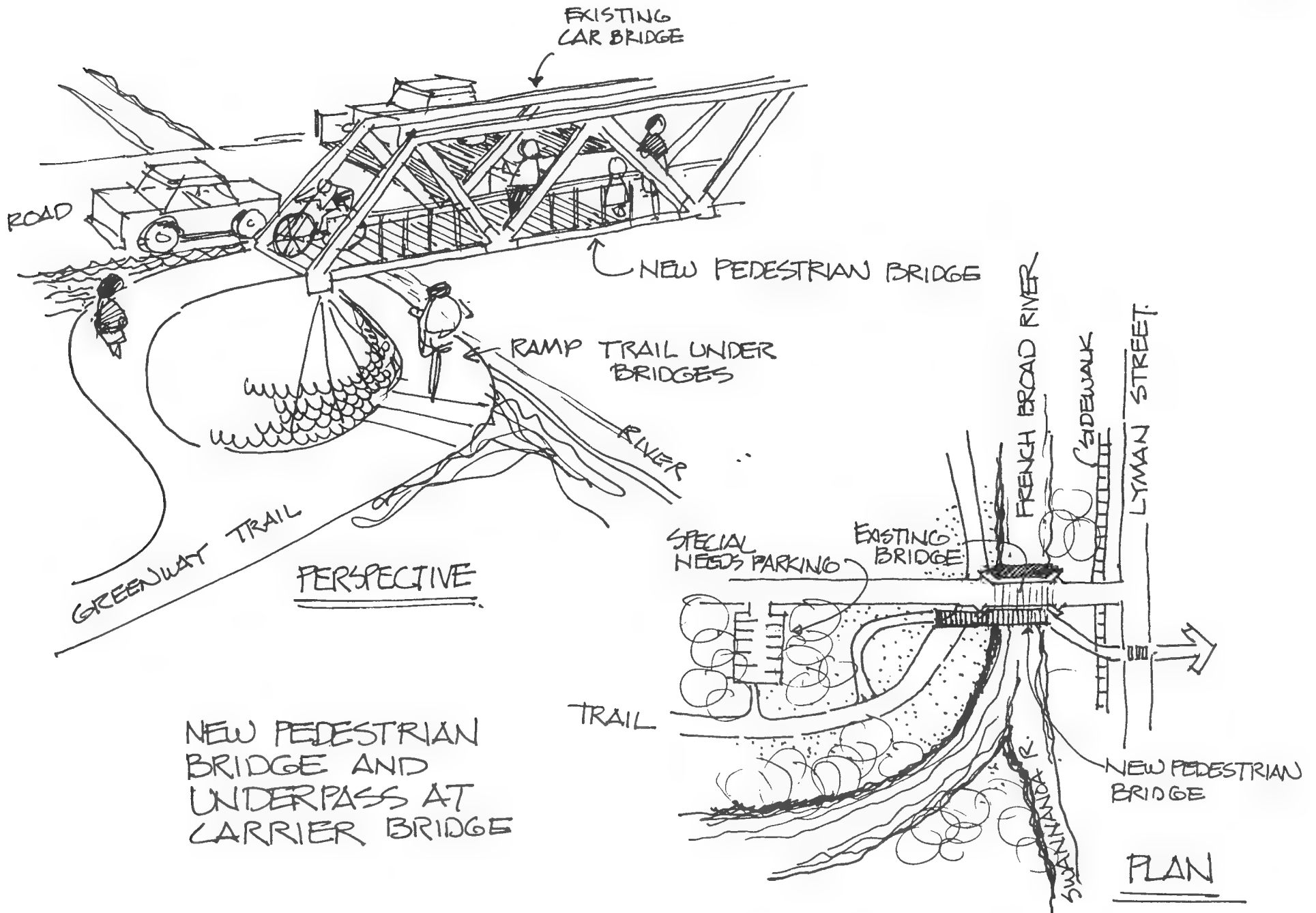
NO SCALE

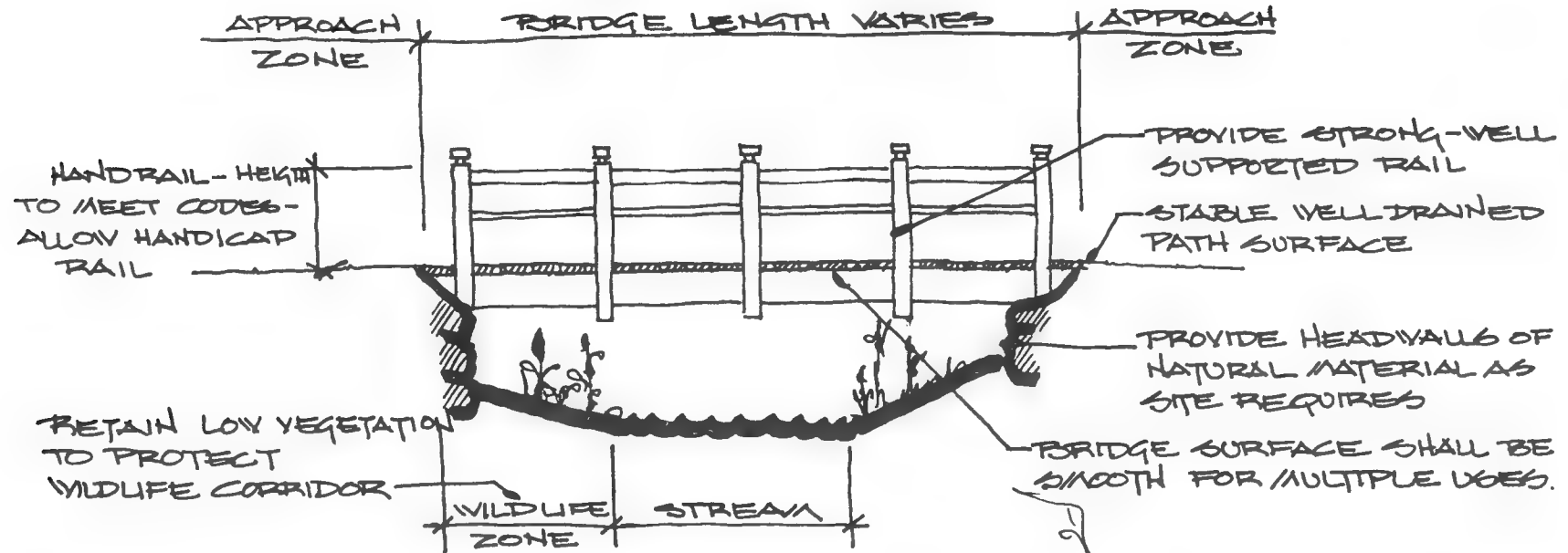


SMALL BOAT ACCESS

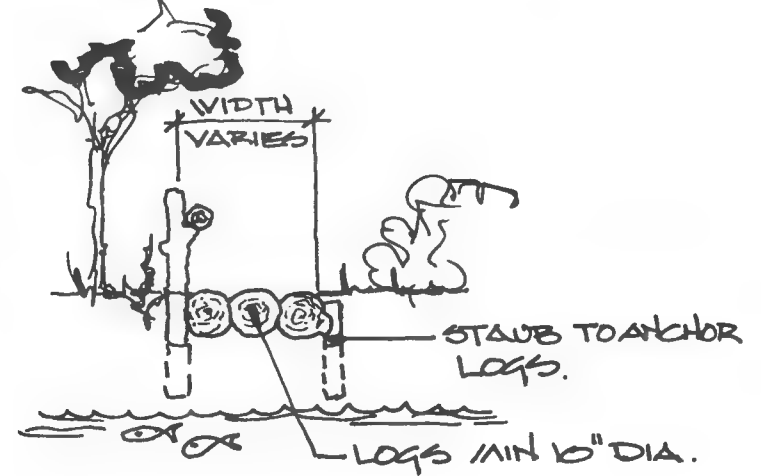
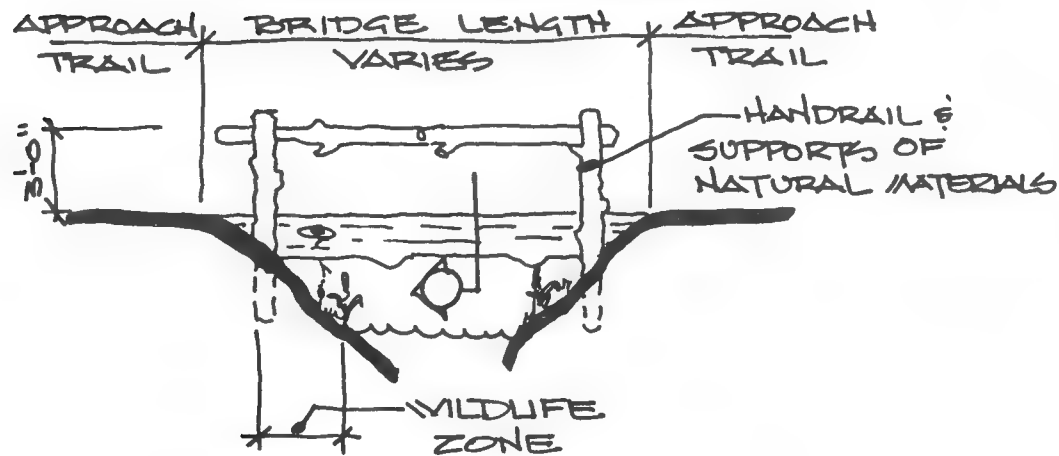


RURAL STREAM CROSSING



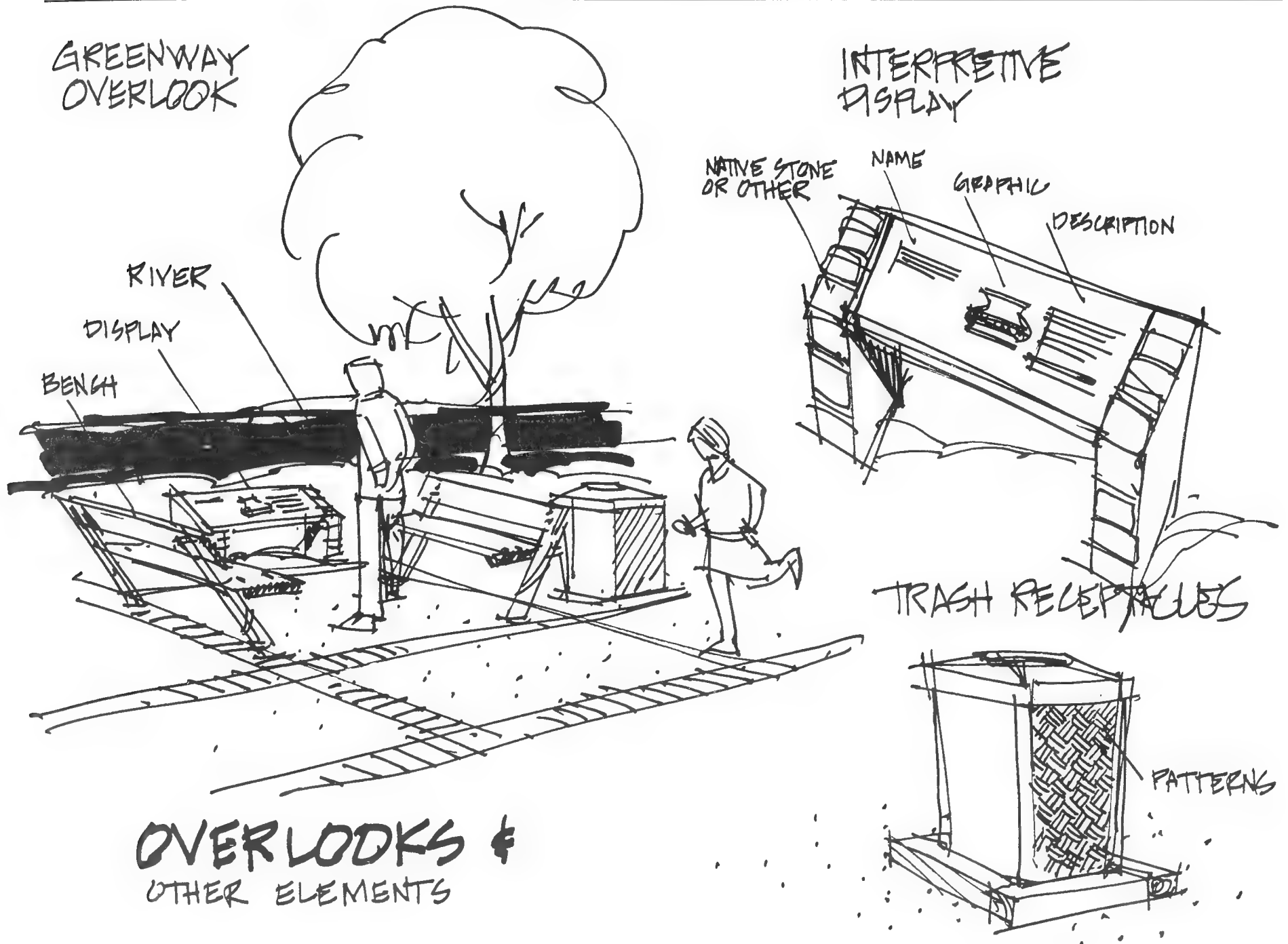


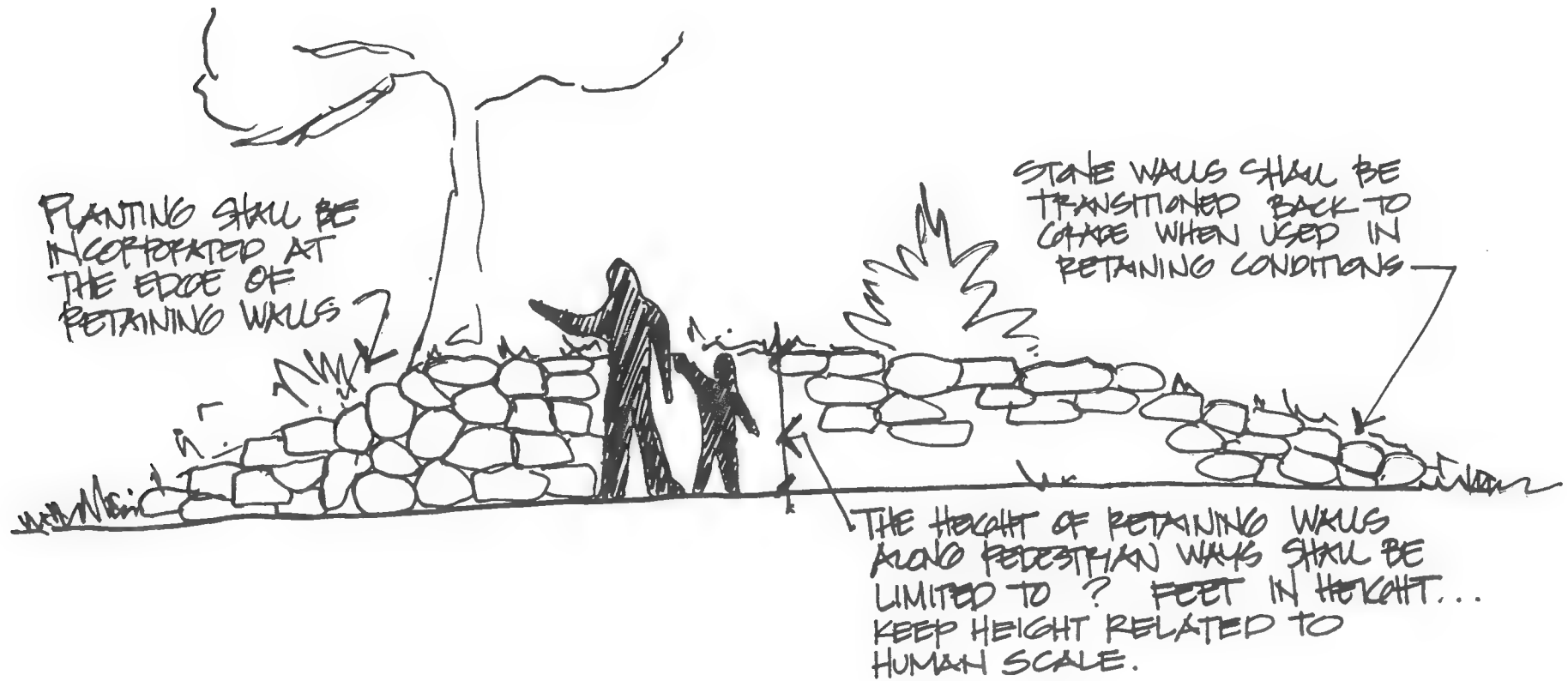
URBAN BRIDGE



TRAIL BRIDGE

BRIDGE DETAILS



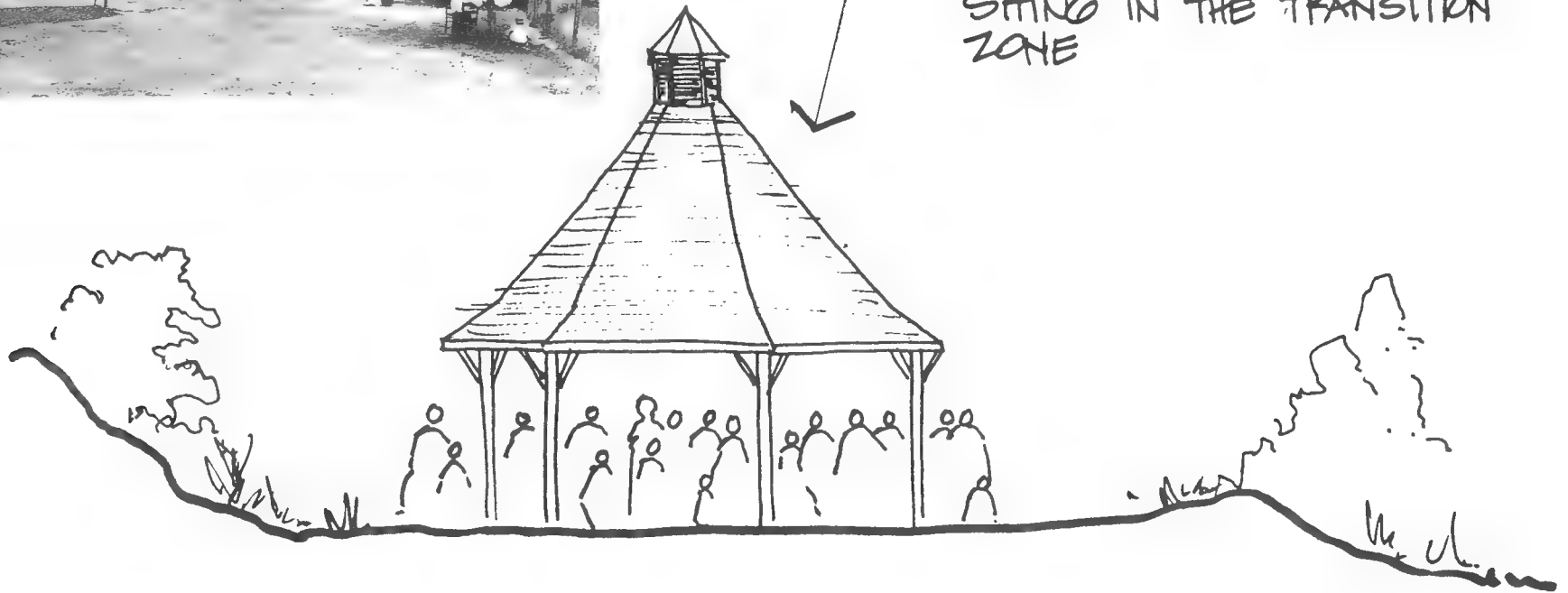


WALL TRANSITIONS



Left, Asheville residents enjoyed Riverside Park in the early 1900s. Photo courtesy of Pack Memorial Library, North Carolina Collection.

STRUCTURES FOR LARGE GROUP USE SHOULD BE GIVEN A FOCAL POINT SITING IN THE TRANSITION ZONE

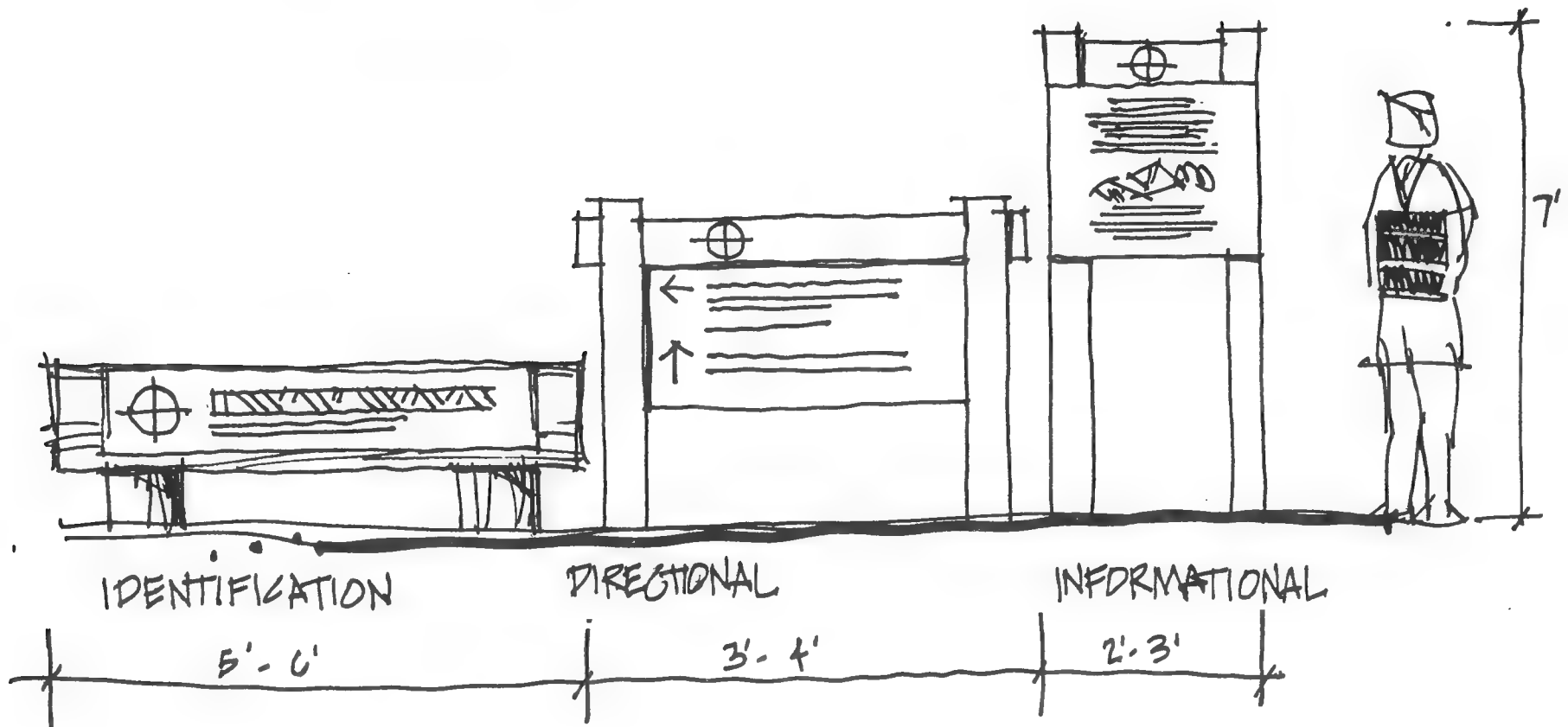


LARGE GROUP STRUCTURES

Graphics

"Every built thing in the landscape has the opportunity to become an artful object. Even the most functional things should be artfully done."

— Gary Meisner



SIGNAGE=

Graphics Team:

Bob Biddle, Jan Brooks Loyd,
Joe Sonderman

Logo and Type Style

A logo is a graphic or symbolic element that visually identifies a certain entity. Through repeated use, the logo or symbol becomes so familiar to viewers that they come to automatically associate the logo with the entity. For example, most people are familiar with the GE logo and know that it is a graphic representation of General Electric, even when the full name does not appear. The universal logo for Handicap Accessibility is well-known even when no letters appear with the image, as in handicap parking spaces.

Designing a logo for the greenway project is a complex challenge. The logo will help create a consistent image and visual harmony all along the greenway. A boat launching facility will look very different than a large group picnic shelter, and the two facilities may be located far away from one another. But when the signs identifying the two facilities are related in design and material, and they both display the greenway logo, then the viewer recognizes both sites as part of an overall system.

The greenway logo should reflect the feeling of the natural surroundings — water, mountains, trees, cityscape. It should be easily recognizable by all, whether it is abstract or realistic, and it should be uncomplicated enough in design so that it is as attractive printed on a brochure as it is carved into a wood trail marker. The

greenway logo will be successful if viewers instantly recognize it and associate it with Asheville's greenway project.

The logo should be designed both as a graphic element by itself and as a graphic element combined with a specific style of type. The desired result is that viewers will become equally familiar with the type style and the graphic by themselves and in combination with one another. The type may identify the name of the greenway project, the title of an interpretive exhibit, or the entrance to a greenway facility — the words may change, but the style or "look" is the same.

Both the logo and the type style must be designed and selected for successful reproduction. The logo and the various type elements will be reproduced in various sizes and formats, in black and white and color. The logo should be identifiable and the type readable on an outdoor sign, on the embroidered patch of a ranger's uniform, or a festival banner, or in a promotional brochure.

Greenway design will naturally evoke color — sky tones, earth tones, water colors. While the logo should reflect the overall greenway design, it should also be easily and economically reproduced in color (therefore limited to one or two colors) and successfully reproducible in black and white.

The logo's companion type style should be commonly available in a variety of sizes and weights, and should be highly readable, to facilitate the printing and sign-making processes. The chosen type style

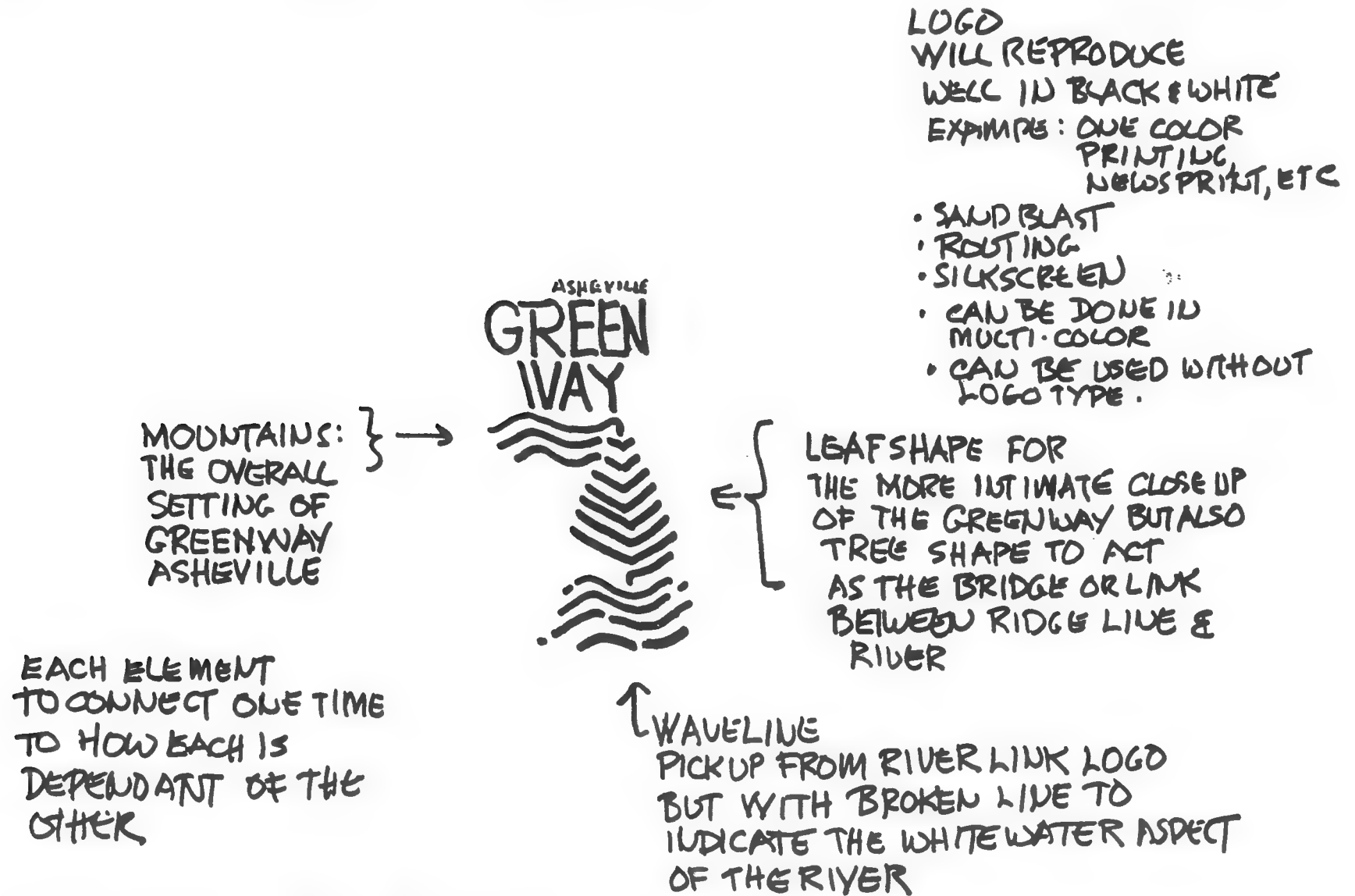
will appear on items as various as calendars, T-shirts, coffee mugs, greenway guide booklets, sweatshirts, banners, posters, decals, and newsletters. It will appear in color, in black on white, and in white on black and so should be simple enough in design to successfully convey information.

The Graphics Team suggests that a Design Controls Steering Committee may be necessary to monitor the use of the greenway logo and type style, and to ensure the visual consistency of greenway images. Such a committee may become more important when many greenway concession businesses, from water sports suppliers to restaurants, are using the greenway logo to draw attention to their operations.

Because the logo is so important to the success of greenway use and promotion, it may be advisable to sponsor a one-day mini-charette for the specific purpose of designing the logo and selecting its companion type style. The Team recommends that classic non-trendy type styles, such as Goudy and Univers, be considered.

Signage

Signs must respond to the specific navigational and informational needs of the greenway. Signs will identify entrances and access points along the greenway and will assist users in locating specific destinations. The functions of signs also may include traffic control, identification of specific amenities, directions to nearby facilities, handicap accessibility information, interpretive exhibits of historic sites or points of special interest. Therefore, an



LOGO DESIGN

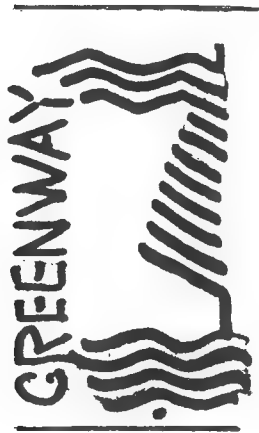
overall system of interrelated signs should be devised, so that all informational and directional needs can be met. Naturally, the greenway logo and type style should be used in all signs for easy identification by greenway users and to preserve graphic consistency.

Signs should integrate well into the environment — they should fulfill their functions without detracting from the scenic beauty of the environment. They should also be designed according to the charette's overall goal of using indigenous materials. In the selection of materials, durability and recycling options should be considered, as well as the various methods of creating signs (sand-blasting, painting, routing, screenprinting).

Any sign system will have to adhere to various state, city, and county regulations — as well as to the overall design of the greenway. The Graphics team proposes a mini-charette for the purpose of designing such a system. Participants should include all parties involved in the design, installation, and maintenance of signage — North Carolina Department of Transportation, City of Asheville Department of Public Works, etc. RiverLink is already considering such a mini-charette as a possibility for early 1992, with results to be published in the Buncombe County Greenway Master Plan.

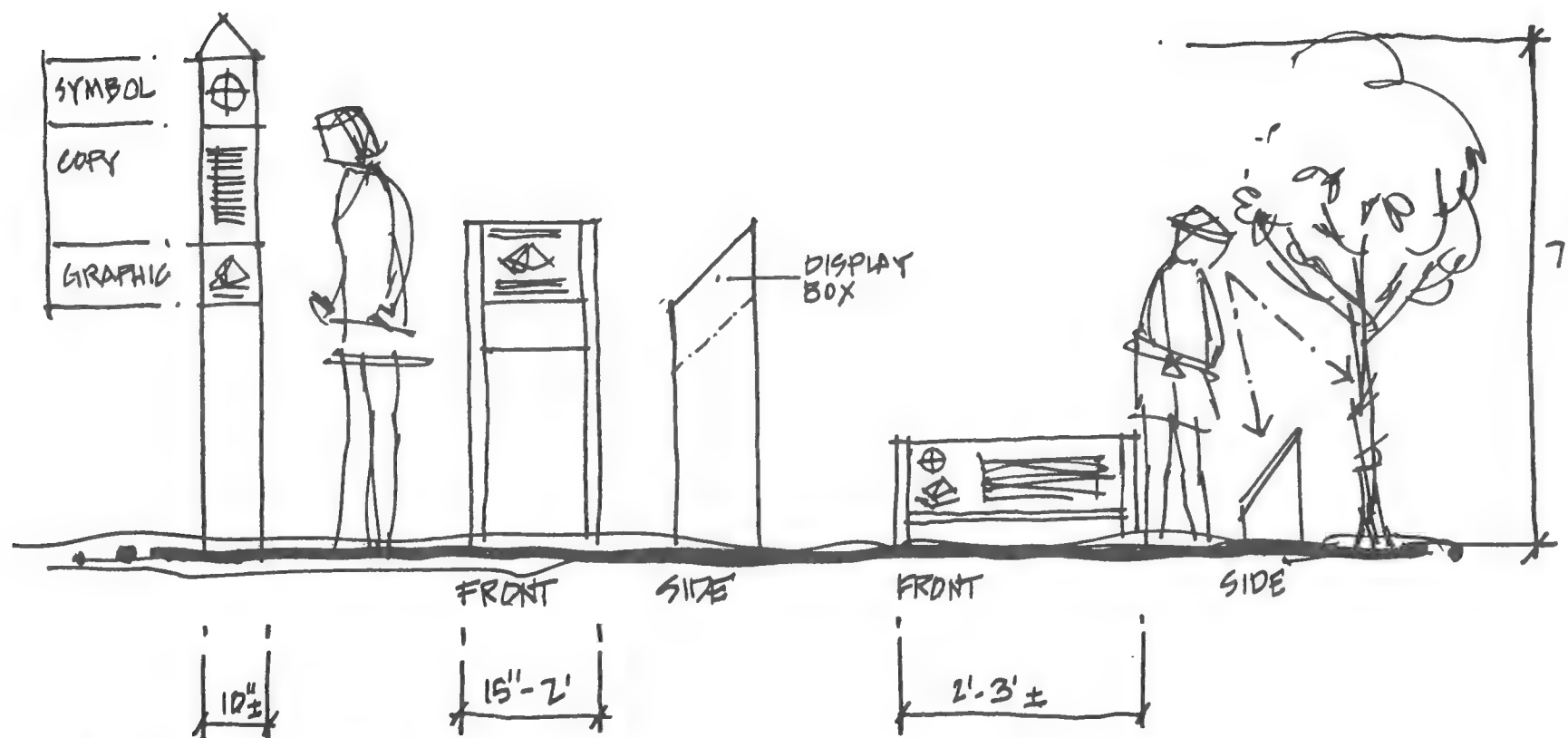


*Some examples
of logo design
possibilities.*

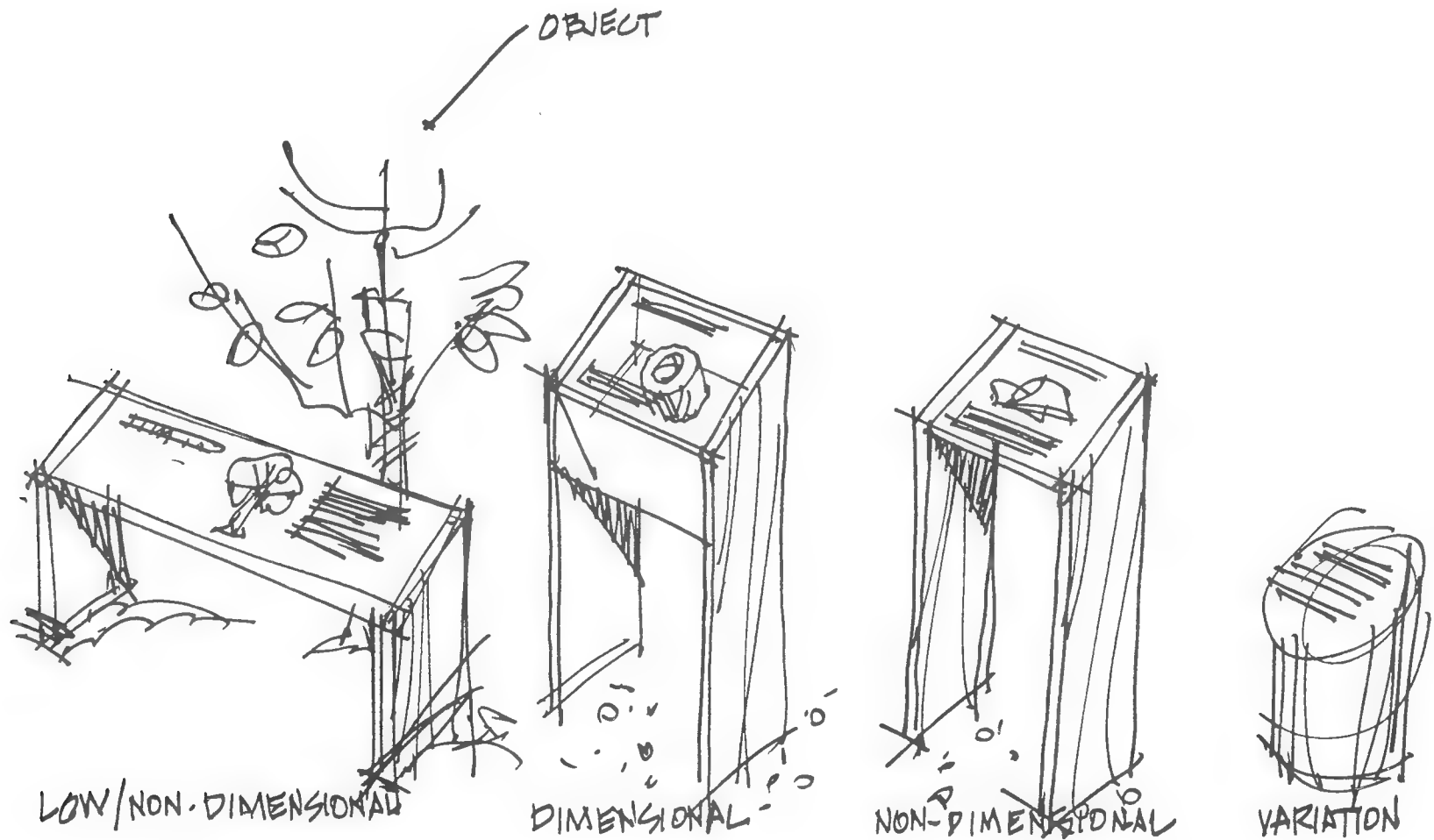


RYLON

BASIC DISPLAYS & MARKERS



DISPLAYS,
SIGNAGE & MARKERS =



INTERPRETIVE GRAPHICS=
VARIATIONS

Graphics for Interpretive Displays and Markers

Such structures should be complementary to the site furnishings and should incorporate the capability for change, as exhibits may change. They should be able to accept elements that are dimensional (objects and artifacts) and non-dimensional (maps, descriptive text, charts).

Displays should also be designed for durability. Because of the high degree of human contact, they should be able to endure the normal wear and tear of touch, as well as the effects of weather.

Lighting

Lighting plays a key role in helping users identify important sites and greenway access points, as well as increasing visibility and security at night. Lighting fixtures should be complementary to other site

furnishings and should be located to best conserve resources. Illumination and security factors are also important in the design of lighting.

Cultural, Natural, Artistic Interpretation

The cultural history of the region — its written form and material evidence (objects, artifacts), myths, and oral traditions all serve as valuable resources for the design process and for interpretive exhibits along the greenway. Opportunities for culturally-inspired design are boundless — from symbols used for signage to the patterns and rhythms found in pathways, stone walls, and other design elements. Exciting possibilities also exist for integrating the natural environment into greenway design, through the sound of water or the smell of floral and fragrant landscaping.

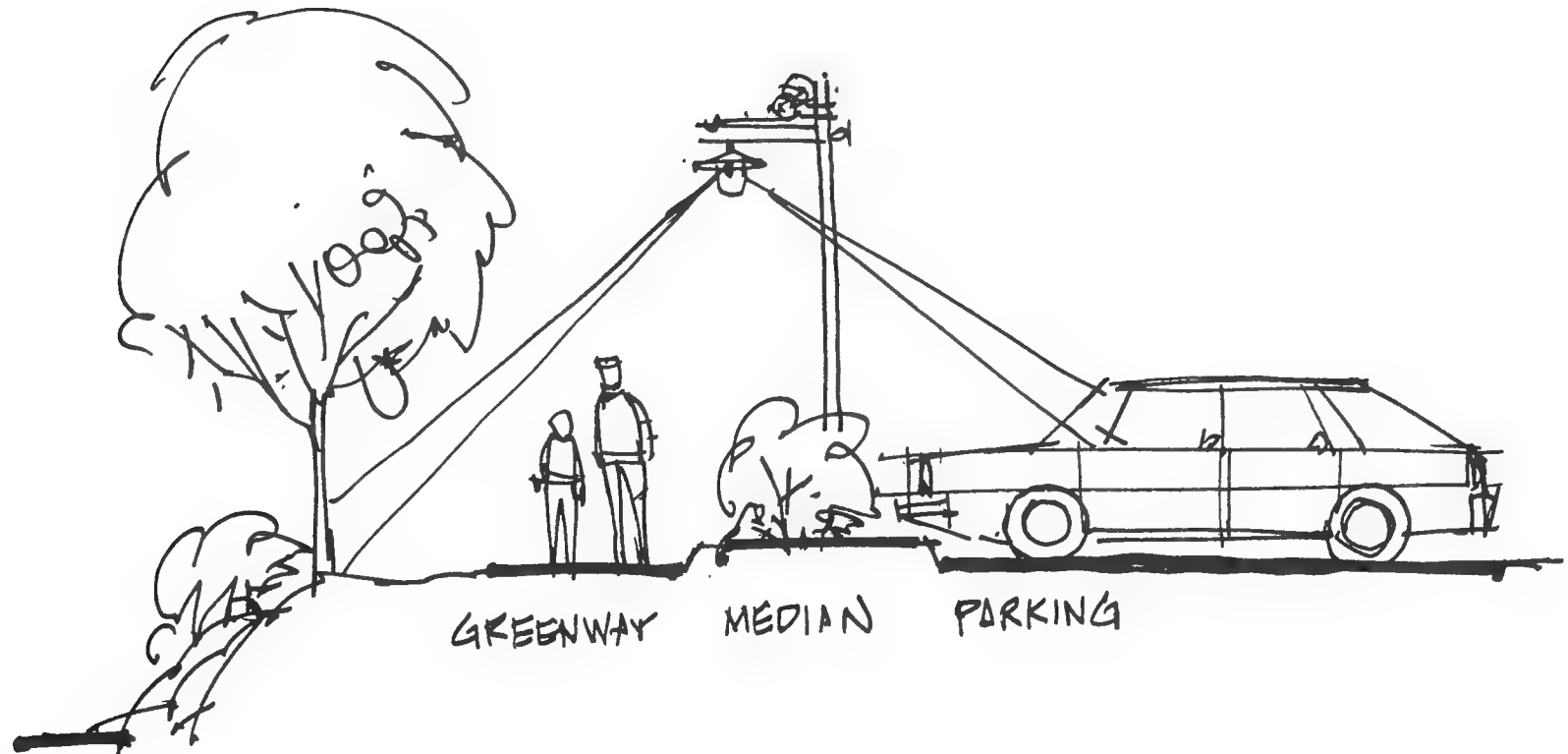
Resources to consider in the design of greenway elements, interpretive exhibits, and public art collaborations:

- Pre-historical objects/artifacts found in the inventories of digs executed in the region: pottery forms, chards, arrowheads; tools, ritual objects, rock formations; known textile patterns; other pre-historical uses of indigenous materials.
- Regional Indian objects, myths, ritual: basket patterns and forms such as Cherokee herringbone doubleweave; coil patterns; blanket weaves; plant sources of natural dyes.
- Regional craft traditions and forms: regional pottery, such as the symbols found in Stevens cameo ware, Batchelder, etc.
- Wood carving traditions: Tryon toy makers.
- Early utilitarian carving: bowls, spoons, rakes, other agricultural tools.
- Textiles: quilt motifs and loom-woven coverlet patterns; rag rugs.
- Whirlygigs, birdhouses.
- Ironwork: decorative, agricultural, architectural.
- Regional literary history: storytelling, local authors and playwrights; theatrical history.
- Furniture: mountain chair forms, caning.
- Dance and performance history: clogging, square dancing; music and traditional instruments.

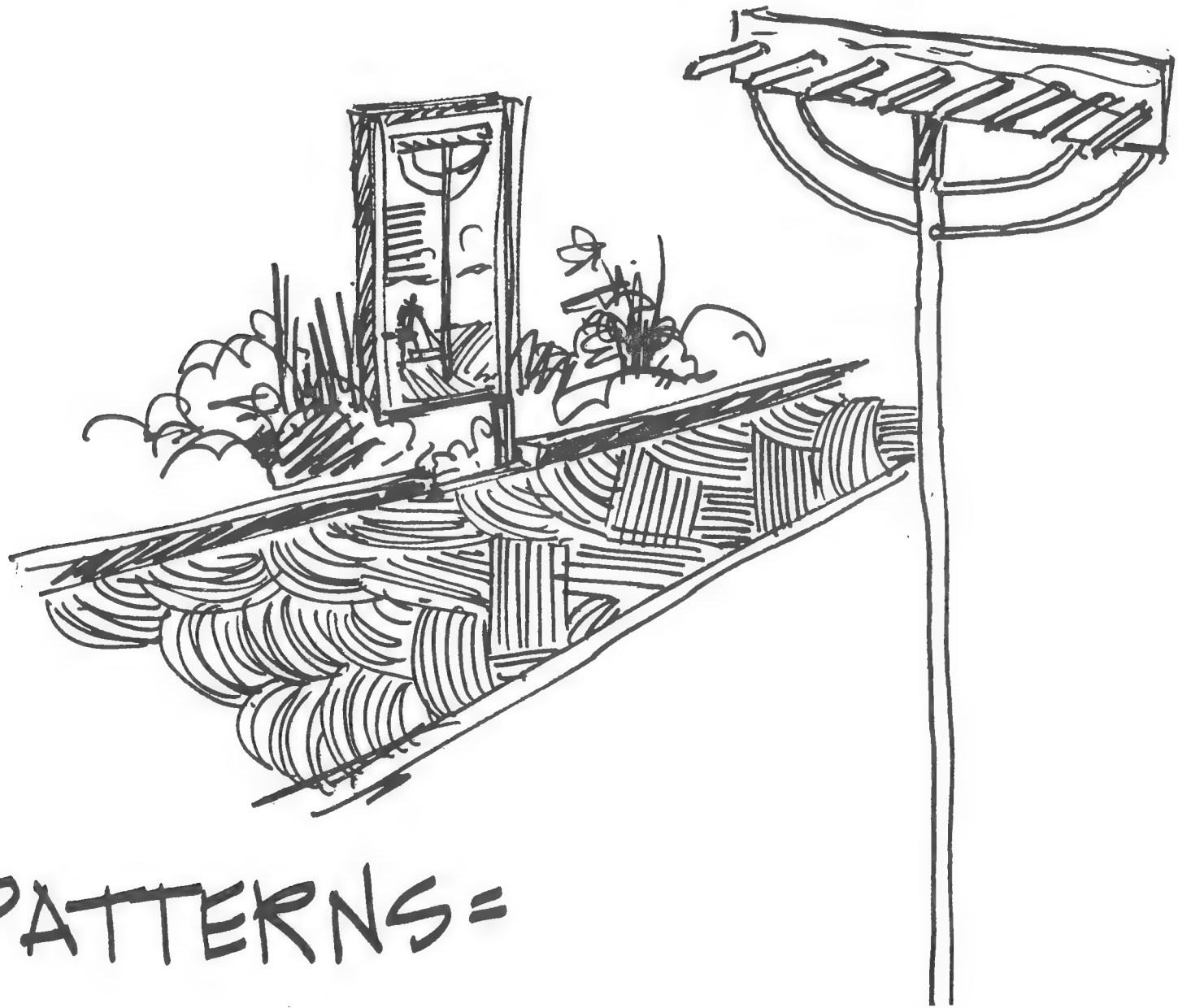
“Art today is undefinable. We should embrace and explore diversity in search of personal meaning — particularly in a public setting.”

— Kevin Hogan

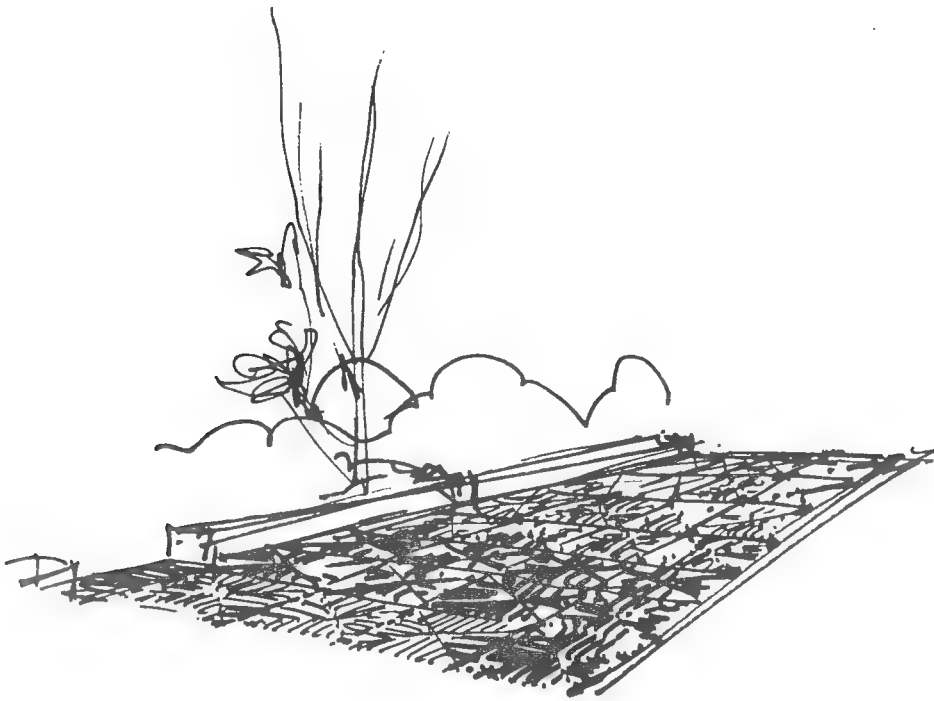
DUAL-PURPOSE LIGHTING



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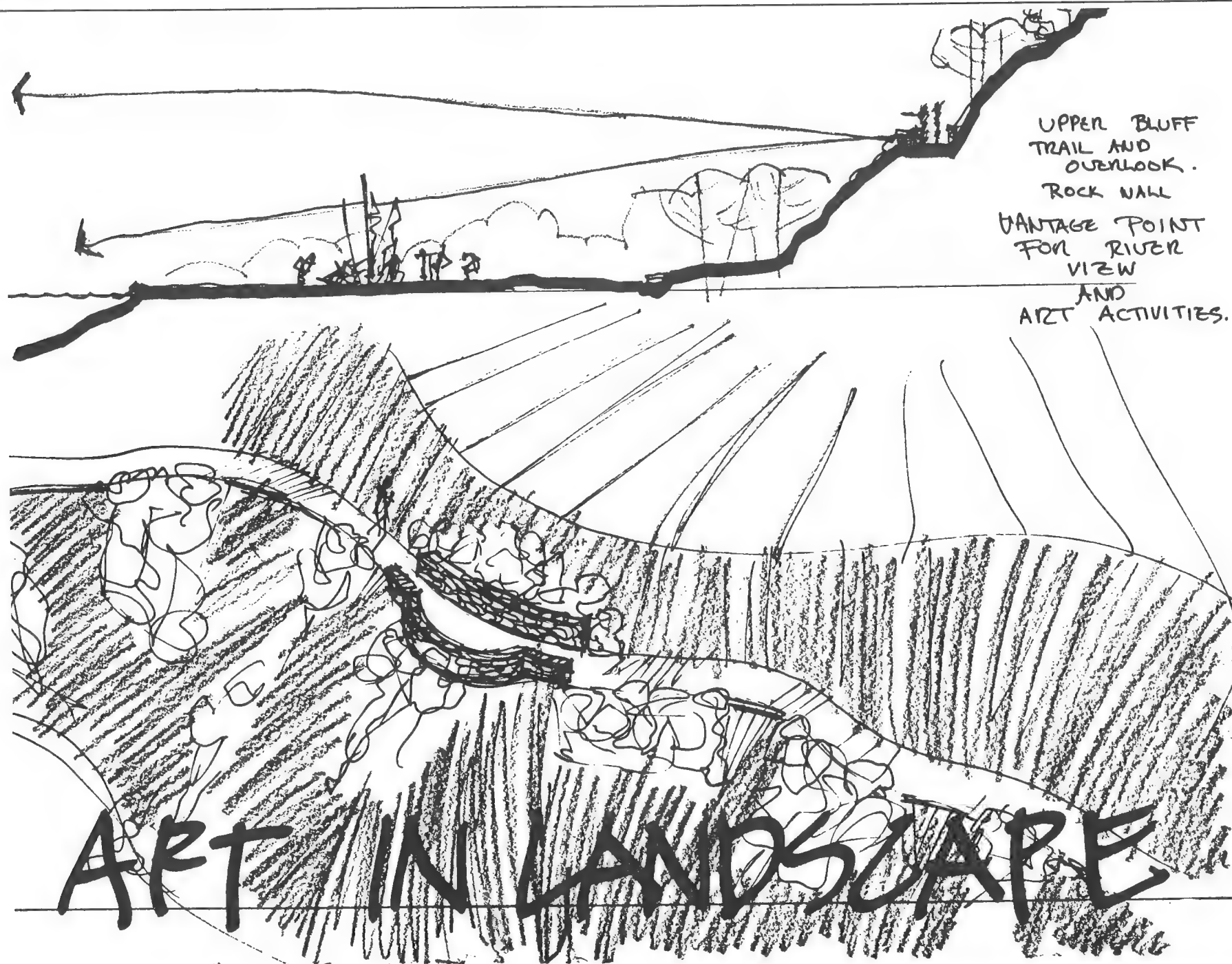


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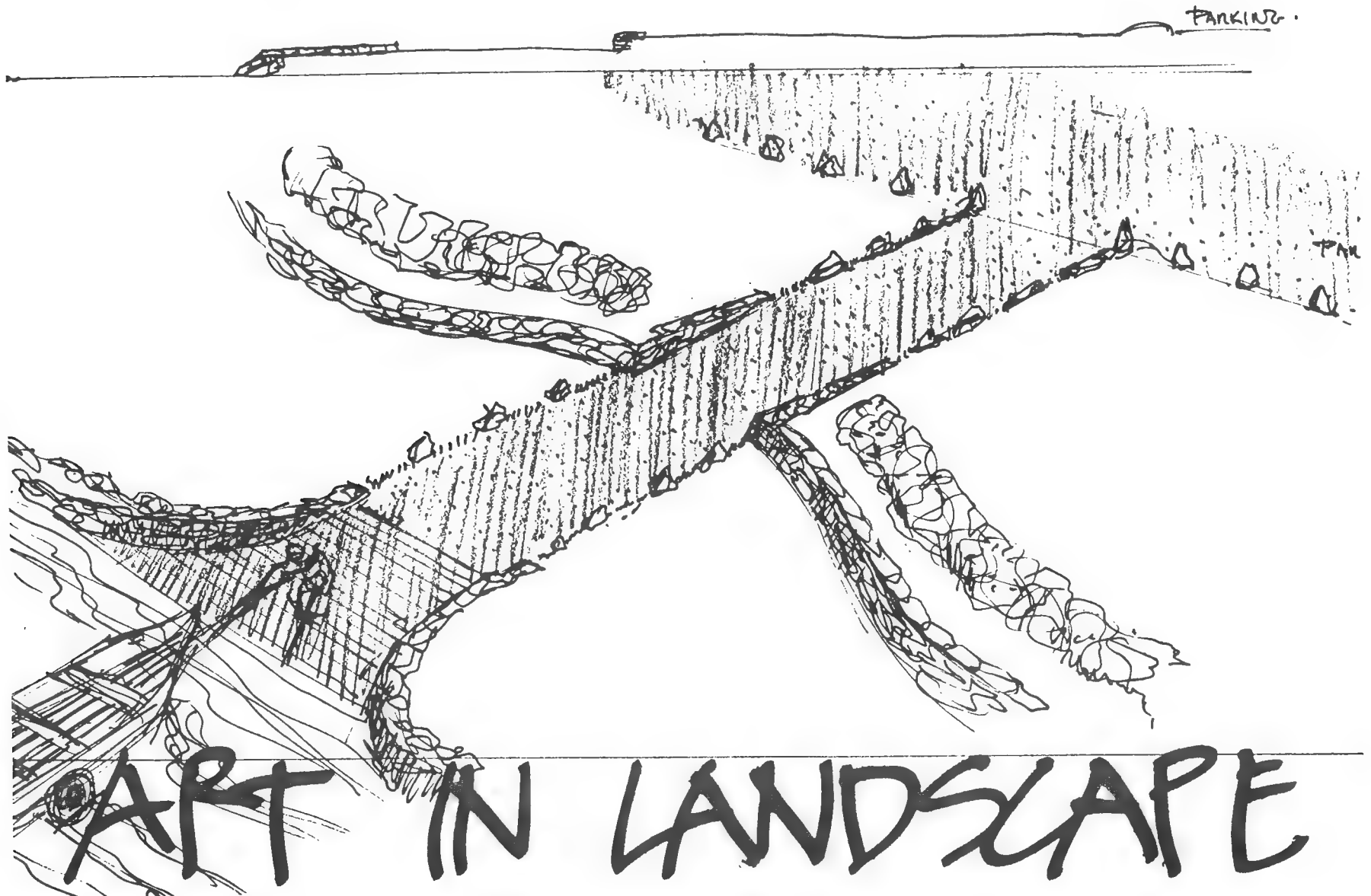
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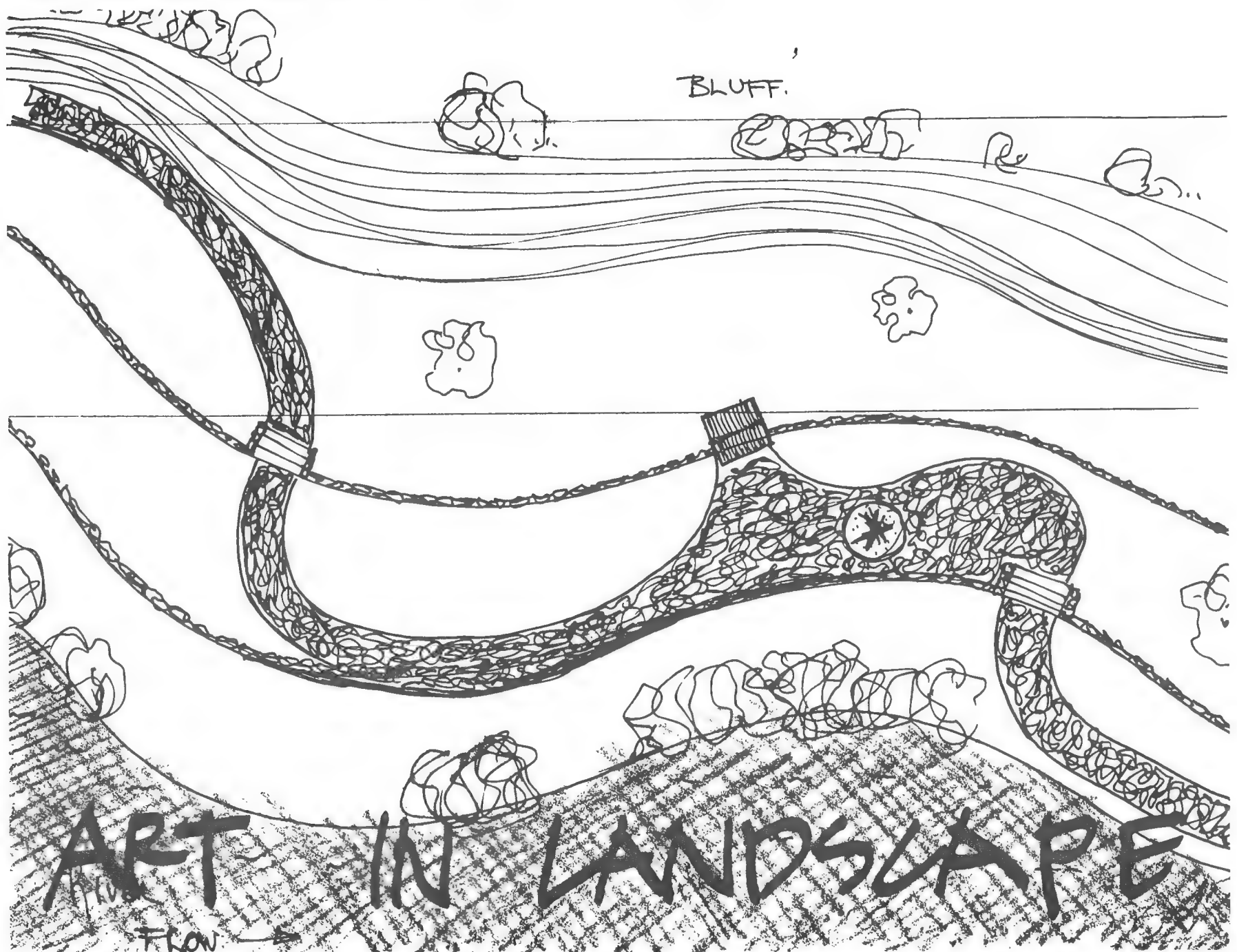
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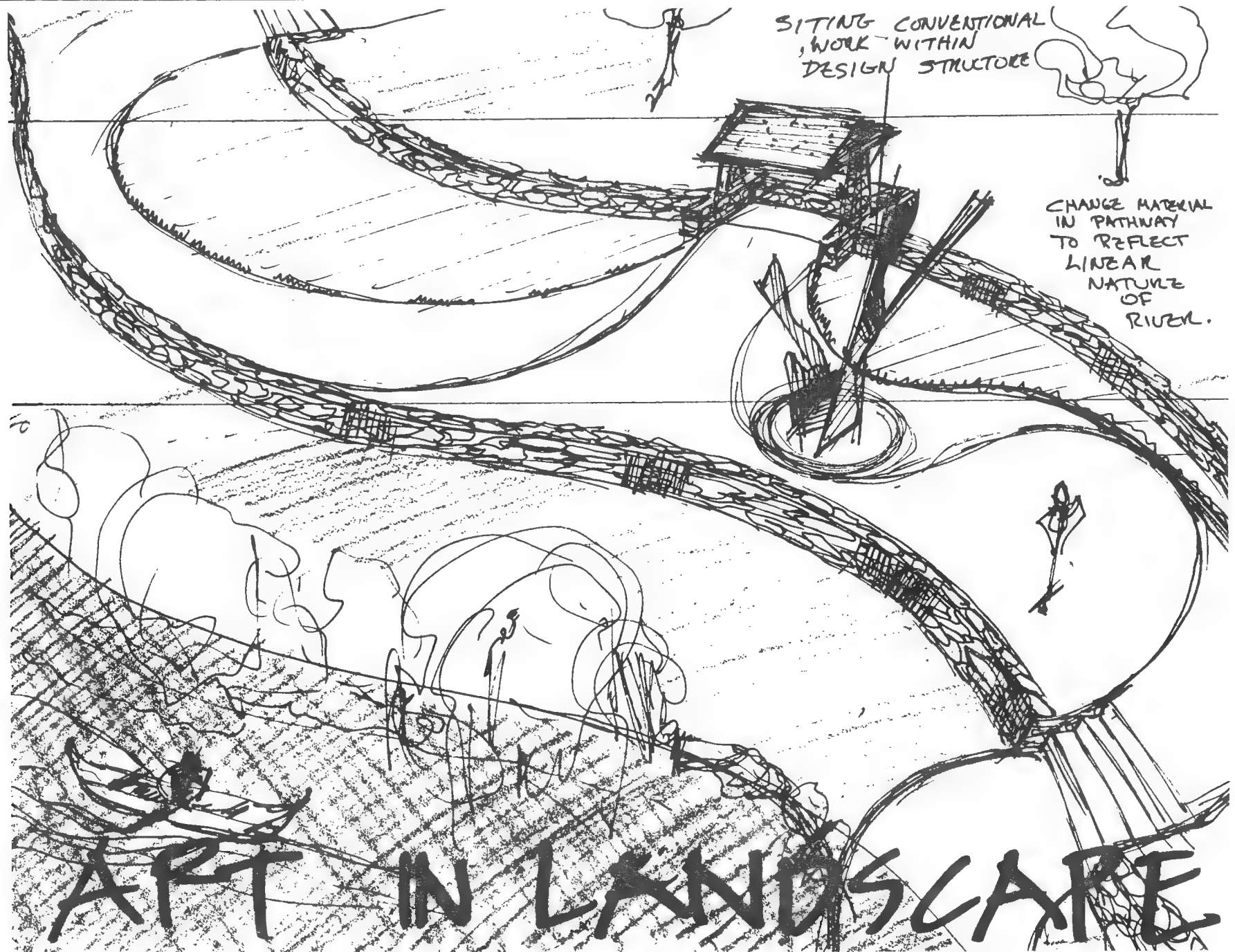


BOAT RAMP

BREAKING AESTHETIC CONSIDERATIONS FOR QUICK RECREATIONAL ACCESS.

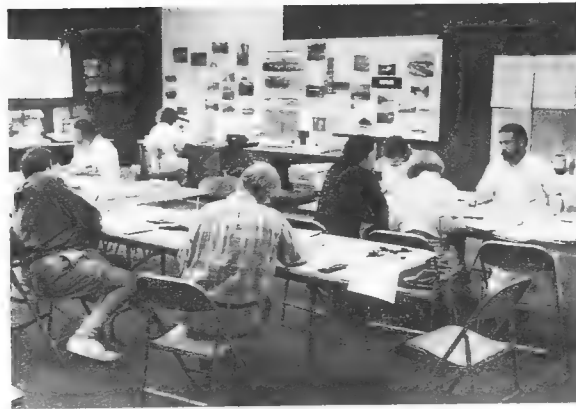






The intensity of a design charrette, such as Asheville's, encourages a freedom of idea exchange not normally found even in the traditional creative process."

— Joe Sonderman



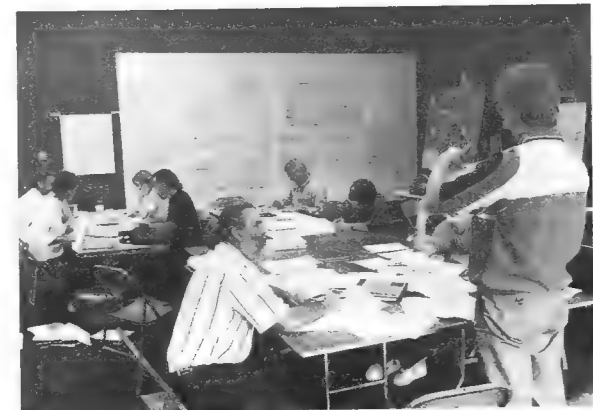
"I hope we are witnessing a new beginning for one of our most valuable natural assets."

— Bob Biddle



"I think it was surprising to a number of team members to find themselves arguing against their normal biases."

— Luther Smith





1991 Asheville Open Space Design Charette Team in front of Richmond Hill:

Crouching at front, left to right — riverfront property owner Porge Buck, Kevin Hogan.

Standing, left to right — Jane Gianvito Mathews, Joe Sonderman, Jan Brooks Loyd, Rich Untermann, RiverLink Executive Director Karen Cragnolin, Bob Biddle (behind Karen Cragnolin), Charette Chairman Luther Smith, Charette Facilitator Gary Meisner, Al Kopf, Kate Mathews, Chuck Flink, Dan Millspaugh.

1991 Asheville Charette Team Members

Robert N. Biddle

Bob is the Creative Art Director at Daniels Graphics, an Asheville design and printing firm. He is the designer of the RiverLink logo and promotional brochure.

Karen Z. Cragnolin

Karen is Executive Director of RiverLink, Inc., and served as the Project Manager for both the 1989 and 1991 Asheville Riverfront Design Charettes. She is an attorney, Chairwoman of River Week in 1989 and 1990, and Chairwoman of the Greenway Subcommittee of the Asheville Tree & Greenway Commission. Karen also serves on the N.C. Greenway Conference Organizing Committee.

Deborah Eagle, MFA

Deborah is the Design Arts Coordinator for the North Carolina Arts Council. The thesis for her MFA from Rhode Island School of Design was "Art in Public Places." She was the originator of The Design Assembly in May, 1991, which brought N.C. artists of all types together for a design workshop—architects, landscape architects, public art experts, industrial and product designers, photographers, planners, and historic preservationists.

Charles A. Flink, ASLA

Chuck is President of Greenways Incorporated, a North Carolina environmental planning and landscape architecture consulting firm that specializes in open space, greenway, park, and cultural facilities design. He has developed design plans for more than 200 miles of greenway space for projects in eight eastern states. In January, 1991, Chuck was appointed by North Carolina Governor Martin to serve on the N.C. Greenways Advisory Panel. He is co-author of The Greenway Design Manual, scheduled for release in 1992.

Kevin Hogan, MFA

Kevin is a studio artist with a special interest in public art; he lives in Asheville, North Carolina. His work has been widely published and exhibited since 1975 and he has conducted lectures and workshops in Cleveland, Ohio and in several North Carolina cities.

Albert B. Kopf, ASLA

Al is Landscape Architect for the City of Asheville's Department of Parks and Recreation, responsible for the landscape planning and construction of municipal parks and properties. He also researches and plans for open space development within the City's zoning jurisdiction to coincide with general land use requirements. Al was a member of the 1989 Asheville Riverfront Charette team.

Jan Brooks Loyd, MFA

Jan, from Newell, North Carolina, is a sculptural ironworker and project coordinator for research, conferences, exhibitions, and other programs in the arts. Formerly on the arts faculty of Southern Illinois University and UNC-Charlotte, she has served as a public art consultant, panelist, and juror for numerous organizations and institutions. Her public art interests and professional experience include cultural planning, public art competitions, community organizing, fundraising, and the social and critical issues surrounding public art.

Kate Mathews, Charette Editor

Kate is an editor and publication designer in Asheville, North Carolina. She edited and designed The Riverfront Plan, the publication that documents the 1989 Asheville Riverfront Charette.

Jane Gianvito Mathews, AIA

Jane is a project architect with the Asheville firm, SPACEPLAN/Architecture, Interiors & Planning, Inc. Interested in historic preservation, she is Vice President of the Preservation Society of Asheville and Buncombe County, and co-author of The Manor and Cottages, a documentary publication about one of Asheville's historic neighborhoods. Jane was also a member of the 1991 Urban Trails Charette sponsored by the City of Asheville Downtown Development Office and a member of the 1989 Asheville Riverfront Charette team.

**Gary W. Meisner, FASLA,
Charette Facilitator**

Gary is a principal with Bentley Meisner Associates, Inc., landscape architects, land planners, and urban designers in Cincinnati, Ohio. His professional experience has focused on large-scale land planning, park and recreational design, as well as urban planning and design. Gary has served as Ohio's National Trustee to the American Society of Landscape Architects, as chair of the National Community Assistance Team program, and as chair of the ASLA Publications Board, which publishes Landscape Architecture magazine.

Daniel W. Millspaugh, MFA

Dan is Assistant Professor of Sculpture, Photography, and Drawing at the University of North Carolina, Asheville. Among his commissioned works are the Arch Nichols Memorial on the Mountains-to-Sea Trail on the Blue Ridge Parkway; the Appalachian Trail 50th Anniversary Memorial at Hot Springs, North Carolina; and the Thomas Wolfe Angel in Asheville, North Carolina.

**Luther E. Smith, ASLA, APA,
Charette Chairman**

Luther is a RiverLink Board Member and a principal with Luther E. Smith & Associates, P.A., in Hendersonville, North Carolina. His work has included project strategy planning, land use planning, land analysis, zoning, erosion control, and landscape architecture for residential, commercial, and industrial projects. He was also a member of the 1988 Landscape Architecture and Planning Professional Exchange team to the Peoples Republic of China, specializing in land use and environmental concerns in mountainous areas. Luther was also a member of the 1989 Asheville Riverfront Charette.

Joe Sonderman

Joe is a principal with Design/Joe Sonderman, Inc., a Charlotte, North Carolina firm specializing in museum, product, graphic, and environmental design. Among his design projects are Discovery Place in Charlotte; North Carolina Zoological Park in Asheboro; Kiawah Island Resort in South Carolina; The Museum of Hilton Head in South Carolina; Pacific Science Center in Seattle, Washington; and the Charlotte, North Carolina city logo.

Richard K. Untermann, ASLA

Rich is a Professor of Landscape Architecture, Urban Design, and Environmental Studies at the University of Washington. His scholarship is application- and urban-oriented, and flows from his experience with the design of housing environments and communities. His research and publications include street design, pedestrian circulation issues, and reducing the impact of the automobile. He has participated in many design charettes and has served as juror, moderator, panelist, and coordinator of many community planning symposiums and exhibitions.

1989 Charette Team Recommendations

NOTE: This summary of the 1989 Asheville Riverfront Charette recommendations was originally published in The Riverfront Plan and appears here verbatim. Because of new developments that have taken place since 1989 and because of the flexibility of The Riverfront Plan, some of these recommendations have already been implemented or have been adjusted to adapt to changing circumstances.

The first phase, **Immediate & Ongoing Action**, includes proposed actions that can be undertaken immediately and up to 5 years from now. Most of these actions would be instituted as ongoing programs that continue for the life of the project. The second phase, **Organization & Development**, proposes actions that can be reasonably undertaken in 5 to 15 years from now. The third phase, **Maintenance & Growth**, includes long-term proposed actions that cannot be reasonably undertaken after 15 years, but that would be ongoing from their eventual initiation.

For details and complete background information establishing the basis for these recommendations, refer to the individual team reports in this publication.

Phase One: Immediate & Ongoing Action

River Valley Team Recommendations

- Secure official state agency and local government recognition and support of this report.
- Secure official city and county designation of the French Broad Riverfront Planning Committee, Inc. as the commis-

sion that monitors the progress of this project.

- Institute a comprehensive stormwater management program within the urban project area.
- Institute a program that enhances and maintains the riverbanks and protects them from erosion.
- Evaluate buildings in the floodway for rehabilitation, if historically significant, or for removal.
- Protect the bluffs on western side of river, through tools such as zoning, to maintain an environmentally stable buffer between river and city and as opportunities for river vistas. Utilize existing West Asheville roads that lead to the bluffs as access to river overlooks.
- Designate an initial major focal element of the riverfront — the **Riverfront** district — between the Smith and Haywood Bridges. Identify this area as a project starting point through zoning, ordinances, graphics and signage, and increased community awareness. Continue communication with property owners in the area to publicize the goals of the project. This area will feature a concentration of restaurants, offices, retail stores, water sports suppliers, etc. and will be the “core” of the district.
- Develop a **Whitewater Course** in an existing ravine on the west side of the river near the Smith Bridge. Initiate acquisition of the property and begin solicitation of private development of the facility.
- Initiate development of bike paths through Riverfront area.
- Develop and adopt a coordinated set of

design guidelines, for use in all project-related signs, promotion, etc.

- Designate gateways to the river through clean-up, landscaping, and identification at river crossings and access points.
- Identify greenway sections in the core Riverfront district through graphics and signage, and initiate land acquisition and easements in designated greenway areas.

Urban Linkages Team Recommendations

- Encourage City and County Planning Departments to develop long-range plans for land acquisition at designated major focal points and access corridors.
- Encourage local government to incorporate land use proposals of this document in the revision of zoning ordinances and maps.
- Develop proposed **Patton Spine**, a series of green spaces at major intersections that creates a boulevard along a “main artery of the City” from City-County Plaza and Pack Square to Pritchard Park and the proposed Gateway Center.
- Protect and improve Pritchard Park and reinforce green space quality; move bus hub, but maintain bus and trolley stops.
- Establish a **trolley system** to link major tourist attractions such as the Grove Park Inn and Biltmore Estate with the downtown core and the Riverfront district.
- Redevelop Grove Arcade for retail use and to become focal point of “Battery Park Square.”
- Identify proposed Gateway Center at the intersection of Clingman Ave., Patton Ave., and Haywood St. This Center will serve as the western end of the Patton

Spine, the eastern gateway to the river, the western gateway to the downtown core, and the major connection to the Riverfront district.

- Identify proposed **Riverside Parkway** through graphics and signage. This parkway will meander through Riverfront district from Broadway to Amboy Rd.
- Provide parking at various points along the proposed Riverside Parkway, in the form of permanent paved facilities and grass lots.
- Sponsor a design competition for anchor site project.
- Identify the Chicken Hill area as a target neighborhood for revitalization.
- Pursue relocation of transit authority storage facility on Hilliard Ave.
- Identify proposed Emerald Necklace as a greenway and develop links through landscaping and signage.
- Identify north-south neighborhood connections to Riverfront district through signage and landscaping at Montford, UNCA, and Biltmore areas.

Regional Linkages Team Recommendations

- Establish a river clean-up program to ensure that the river bed and banks are kept clear of junk, debris, and litter.
- Improve river access signage to help guide residents and visitors to the various access points along the river, and update the 1982 guide map published by Land-of-Sky Regional Council
- Identify the route of a proposed riverfront greenway, through graphics and signage. This greenway will be a larger regional

extension of the Emerald Necklace and the Riverfront district's green spaces.

- Conduct an inventory of natural areas (wildlife habitats, geological outcroppings, unique botanical areas, etc.), archaeological sites, and historic sites to document what exists and what may need protective management.
- Conduct an archaeological survey of floodplain areas exposed by removed buildings.

Phase Two: Organization & Development

River Valley Team Recommendations

- Continue revising zoning ordinances and land-use controls to accommodate proposed uses and to protect mixed-use and environmentally sound areas.
- Institute flood control programs to ensure long-term economic viability of river corridor.
- Develop the proposed Riverside Parkway from Broadway to Amboy Road, meandering through the Riverfront district, to accommodate recreational and commercial traffic.
- Begin development of Riverfront core area through adaptive reuse of historic structures between Smith and Haywood Bridge.
- Designate northern anchor site near the old Riverside Park site (at Broadway and Riverside Drive) to serve as a magnet and as the northern gateway to the Riverfront development. A major recreational or entertainment facility, such as an amphitheater, will later be developed at this site.

- Begin developing southern gateway and anchor site at confluence of Swannanoa and French Broad Rivers, along with other park elements along Amboy Road to include outdoor camping, athletic, fields, and a Railroad Museum in the old roundhouse.

Urban Linkages Team Recommendations

- Further develop proposed Emerald Necklace through creation and connection of larger park-like areas.
- Continue acquisition of properties needed to fully develop proposed Gateway Center and western end of Patton Spine.
- Develop vehicle, bicycle, and pedestrian connector between Gateway Center and Riverfront district, and create a green buffer between this connector and Chicken Hill neighborhood.
- Strengthen link between Riverfront district and West Asheville by suspending pedestrian walkways under the I-240 bridge and Haywood Bridge. Walkways will serve as spectator points from which to view the river and whitewater course, and as access points for fishermen.

Regional Linkages Team Recommendations

- Develop an interpretive exhibit of native plants, representing the internationally unique botanical diversity of the region.
- Begin developing a river-oriented greenway extending out from the Riverfront district into the surrounding region.
- Connect trails within the proposed Riverfront greenway system with adja-

cent trail systems such as the Mountains-to-Sea Trail and Blue Ridge Parkway trails.

Phase Three: Maintenance & Growth

River Valley Team Recommendations

- Gradually change land use from mixed commercial and industrial to a balanced mix of open space, commercial, light industrial, recreation, and residential land uses.
- Further develop Riverfront core area through compatible design of infill structures between the Smith and Haywood Bridges.
- Develop a major facility at northern anchor site/gateway near the site of the old Riverside Park at Broadway and Riverside Drive.
- Develop Depot Park at site of the old depot, to include a lagoon, athletic fields, parking and complementary facilities.

Urban Linkages Team Recommendations

- Design and construct proposed Gateway Center at western end of Patton Spine.
- Develop a lagoon at Depot Park to provide a point of visitor respite, an opportunity for still water recreation such as remote-controlled boats, and to fulfill a possible stormwater management function.

Regional Linkages Team Recommendations

- Further develop the river-oriented greenway extending out from the Riverfront district into the surrounding region.
- Zone the river corridor to give priority to river-dependent land uses, such as water-based recreation and business.
- Relocate under-utilized rail facilities and other non-river-dependent uses.

“For me, the French Broad River flows like a ribbon through our city — a narrow swath of regional vegetation and wildlife reaching into and through the heart of our community.”

— Jane Gianvito Mathews

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Ben Slosman

Biltmore Village Carpet

Luther E. Smith, ASLA, APA

Luther E. Smith & Associates

Pat Starnes

Marge Turcot

Reed House

Robert S. Webb, President

Webb Insurance Company

1991 Charette Resource Team

Agriculture:

Alison Arnold, Associate Agriculture
Extension Agent

Anthropologist:

Dr. Joan Moser, Professor of Anthro-
pology and Sociology, Warren Wilson
College

Arborist:

Dr. Lowell Orbison; Susan Roderick,
Executive Director, Quality Forward

Arboretum:

George Briggs, Director, North Carolina
Arboretum

Attorney:

Patsy Brison, Assistant City Attorney

Bicycle Task Force:

Dr. Will Neville; Tom Redinger

Blue Ridge Parkway:

Gary Everhardt, Superintendent, Blue
Ridge Parkway; **Harry L. Baker**, ASLA,
Blue Ridge Parkway

Buncombe County:

Steve Metcalf, County Manager

Chamber of Commerce:

Steve Holt, Executive Vice President,
Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce

City of Asheville:

Charles Penny, Assistant City Manager

Colleges:

Douglas Orr, President, Warren Wilson
College; **Tom Byers**, Special Assistance
to Chancellor, UNCA

Downtown Development:

Leslie Anderson, Director, Downtown
Development Office

Economist:

Dr. Shirley Browning, Professor and
Chairman, UNCA Department of
Economics

Engineering:

Jack Parsons, AIA, Director of Architecture, Vaughn & Melton Engineers; **Gary Davis**, Project Manager, McGill & Associates

Environmentalist:

Dr. Gary Miller, Professor and Chairman, UNCA Environmental Studies; **Bill Eaker**, Director, Environmental Programs, Land-of-Sky Regional Council

Erosion Control:

Mark Monihan

Fish Biologist:

Micky Clemmons, District 9 Fisheries Biologist

Flood Control:

Jones Tysinger, TVA Civil Engineer; **Russell G. Barker**, Supervisory Hydraulic Technician, U.S. Geological Survey

Community Development:

Pat Smith, Executive Director, WNC Community Foundation

Geology/Geography/Environment:

Woodward Bousquet, Director, Environmental Studies Program, Warren Wilson College

Historian:

Porge Buck; **Kent Newell**, Director, Historic Resources Commission; **Sarah G. Upchurch**

Minority Issues:

Gene Ellison, Attorney and Asheville City Council Member; **Wanda Henry-Coleman**, Director, YMI Cultural Center

Parks & Recreation:

Trisha Crisco, Director, Buncombe County Parks & Recreation; **Dick Meehan**, Superintendant, Parks & Public Facilities

Planning:

Mary Weber, City of Asheville; **Jim Coman**, Zoning Administrator, Buncombe County

Public Relations:

Bob Vollmerhausen, Director of Public Relations, Easterby Associates

Public Works:

James Ewing, Director of Public Works, City of Asheville; **Larry P. Ward**, Asst. Director of Public Works, City of Asheville

Railroads:

Johnnie M. Cone, Superintendant, Terminal, Norfolk Southern Railroad

Redevelopment Projects:

Leo Borregard

Regional Planning:

Robert E. Shepherd, Executive Director, Land-of-Sky Regional Council

Riverfront Business:

Robert Gussman, Director, Environmental Affairs, Ecusta Division

Traffic/Transportation:

Danny R. Tolar, District Engineer, NCDOT; **Mary Helen Duke**, Senior Transportation Planner, City of Asheville; **Kenneth J. Putnam**, Division Traffic Engineer, City of Asheville; **F.D. Daniel Martin**, Division Maintenance Engineer, City of Asheville

Trails:

Dwayne Stutzman, Regional Trail Specialist, EHNR

Utilities:

William Wilcox, Power Distribution, CP&L; **James F. Baldwin**, High Tension Wires and Property Acquisition, CP&L

Water Quality:

Forrest R. Westall, Water Quality Regional Supervisor

Wildlife:

Jeffrey Brooks, District 9 Wildlife Biologist

Zoning:

Mark Monihan, Zoning Enforcement Officer

Charette Thank Yous

North Carolina Arts Council
 The National Endowment for the Arts
 The Charette Team
 The Charette Resource Team
 The North Carolina Collection, Pack
 Memorial Library
 The Thomas Wolfe Collection, Pack
 Memorial Library
 William A. Barnhill Collection, Pack
 Memorial Library
 Asheville Parks & Recreation Department
 Buncombe County Parks & Recreation
 Department
 City of Asheville Community Development
 Department
 Ben Slosman, *for the office space*
 Magnolia's Raw Bar & Grill Restaurant
 Reed House
 The Biltmore Estate
 Richmond Hill Inn & Conference Center
 Champion International Corporation
 North Carolina Arboretum
 Historic Resources Commission of
 Asheville and Buncombe County
 Cellular Telephones of Asheville
 Weststar Photographic Services

Adia Personnel Services
 Dr. Lowell Orbison
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 Carol Alberice
 Mary Webber
 Porge Buck
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 J. Weiland
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 Daniels Graphics
 Bob Vollmerhausen
 Betty Lawrence
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*“The greenway design should ensure accessibility to all,
 whether disabled by a physical handicap or by the
 weight of carrying parcels from market to home.”*

— Chuck Flink

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 Mrs. Julie Johnson - JMJ Associates
 Ms. Elizabeth Johns
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 National Railway Historic Society -
 Asheville Chapter
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 Mrs. George Stevens
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 Long-Range Planning Task Force
 Norma Price
 Greenways
 Karen Cragnolin, Chair



Charette Chairman Luther Smith presents the team's recommendations to interested citizens and members of the press at the close of the charette. Photo: Weststar.

Epilogue

The story of the French Broad River corridor is the story of the American river in microcosm. The French Broad River provided the first transportation routes through these mountains, spawning the first commercial enterprises. When the railroad arrived in 1880 it turned this small mountain town into a city. The railroad also brought those seeking medical treatment and the clean, clear mountain air. It wasn't too long before tourists started to arrive and with them, the people who forever changed the face of Asheville — George Vanderbilt, Edwin Grove, and others. They arrived and were overwhelmed by the beauty of the river and the mountain setting, and called Asheville home.

Long before the white man visited these hills, the American Indians lived along the banks of the French Broad and Swannanoa rivers. We know that because of the archaeological finds that have been unearthed by the N.C. Arboretum, Warren Wilson College, and the Biltmore Estate. The broad floodplains of the river provided fertile land for crops and helped sustain life 6,000 years before Christ. What we also know is that the French Broad River predates the mountains — it was here first, flowing south until the mountains erupted into the sky and reversed its flow north.

By tracing the history of the river, we uncover and examine the evolution of our community. From the Indians who lived along its banks to the industries and businesses that exist there today, each stage of our progress has left its mark on the river. The Cotton Mill, built in 1885, was one of the largest cotton mills in the

Southeast. It boasted more than 400 looms and eventually became the centerpiece of the Cone Mills Industries. Its water tower, which fed the fire sprinkler system, still greets visitors and residents today as they cross the Smoky Park Bridge. The Cotton Mill is but one example of more than 100 riverfront buildings that were inventoried by the Preservation Society of Asheville and Buncombe County, 65% of which were determined to be in good condition, and ready for adaptive reuse.

When George Vanderbilt built his summer home overlooking the French Broad River, he brought together Richard Morris Hunt and Frederick Law Olmsted, architect and landscape architect to work together, so that the natural and built environment would blend harmoniously. He filled his home with the finest examples of tapestries, paintings, crystal, and the latest and best examples of modern engineering. It was in every sense a multi-disciplined project in which each artist — engineer or stone mason, forestry expert, architect or landscape architect — was challenged to execute his best and most innovative work.

Richmond Hill Inn and Conference Center is no less a labor of love or Herculean effort and determination. When Richmond Pearson built his wonderful Queen Anne style home in 1889, it too boasted the latest in modern technology, and the blending of many talents and crafts. By 1981 many thought the Pearson home had outlived its usefulness. It was offered for sale for \$1.00 to the Preservation Society, if and only if the Society would move it. By 1987 the home was in total disrepair. But if

one looked closely, and thank heaven Marge and Jake Michel did, the memory of an elegant past and the vision of a heroic future were visible. It took time, money, and a commitment to excellence to accomplish the miracle that Richmond Hill is today.

The N.C. Arboretum on Bent Creek also contributes to our sense of place along the river. It too is a labor of love and dedication that will produce during the coming years an Arboretum of world standing. It is anticipated that the Arboretum alone will attract more than one million visitors per year to our community. Add to the Arboretum's anticipated visitors the 750,000 who visit the Biltmore Estate and the thousands of people who have discovered the joy and wonder of Richmond Hill, and an impressive vision of beauty and excellence along the river begins to emerge.

Today, as we look ahead to the enormous job of reclaiming the urban corridors of the French Broad and Swannanoa rivers, we have wonderful examples of courage and vision to emulate. And we have wonderful prizes to claim for our efforts. The river is home to more than 800 varieties of fish. The wildlife along its banks is both diverse and abundant. The blue herons that grace the urban skyline and have become the RiverLink mascot, all call the river home — and call us home to the river. Let's make the journey home to the river an artful and beautiful tribute to our past and a harbinger of our future. ♦

Chronology of Richmond Pearson and Richmond Hill

- 1852 Born January 26 at his father's home, also called Richmond Hill in Yadkin County, North Carolina, and later attended Horner's School in Oxford, North Carolina
- 1872 Received Bachelor of Arts degree from Princeton University and delivered the Valedictory Address
- 1872-1874 Studied law under his father Richmond Mumford Pearson, who was Chief Justice of the North Carolina Supreme Court for 20 years
- 1874 Was admitted to the North Carolina Bar
- 1875 Received Master of Arts degree from Princeton and delivered the Master's Oration
- 1874-1877 Served as United States Consul in Belgium
- 1878 Nominated for the Senate by the Democratic Party in Surry and Yadkin Counties but was defeated
- 1882 Married Gabrielle Thomas of Richmond, Virginia
- 1884-1886 Served in the North Carolina Assembly
- 1885 Served in the Lower House of the North Carolina Legislature
- 1886 A son, named Richmond Pearson, Jr. was born
- 1889 Built Richmond Hill
- 1890 Organized a gala 4th-of-July celebration to promote a land development project on Richmond Hill
- 1890 Daughter Marjorie Noel Pearson was born on January 12
- 1893 Son James Thomas Pearson was born on June 24
- 1895 Served in the United States Congress representing the Ninth North Carolina District. Served on the Foreign Affairs committee
- 1900 Son Richmond Pearson, Jr. died of scarlet fever
- 1901 Appointed by President Theodore Roosevelt to be United States Consul in Genoa, Italy
- 1902 Promoted to Minister in Persia
- 1907-1909 Served as Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to Greece and Montenegro
- 1909 Resigned from diplomatic service and returned to the United States to concentrate on his law practice
- 1923 Richmond Pearson died at Richmond Hill
- 1924 Gabrielle Thomas Pearson died in New York shortly after arriving home from trip Persia
- 1924-1951 Marjorie and Thomas Pearson left Richmond Hill under the charge of a caretaker as they traveled and worked around the world
- 1951 Marjorie and Thomas returned to Richmond Hill to open the mansion as a museum
- 1963 Thomas Pearson died on April 16 of a heart ailment
- 1972 Marjorie Pearson died on May 25 after a long illness. Richmond Hill was willed to a cousin, General Hayne Davis Boyden
- 1974 Boyden sold Richmond Hill to the North Carolina Baptist Homes, Inc.—with the stipulation that the house be preserved for at least ten years, during which the Preservation Society of Asheville and Buncombe County made many efforts to preserve the mansion
- 1974 A public auction was held to sell the mansion's furnishings and other treasures from Marjorie Pearson's estate
- 1977-1978 The Western North Carolina Baptist Retirement Home was built on the former Pearson property
- 1981 The Preservation Society of Asheville and Buncombe County purchased 7-1/2 acres of adjoining land, anticipating a possible future need to move the mansion
- 1981 The Baptist Retirement Homes offered to sell Richmond Hill to the Preservation Society of Asheville and Buncombe County for the sum of \$1.00, providing that the mansion be moved off the property within one year
- 1984 After the Preservation Society conducted a three-year fund-raising campaign to raise \$100,000, the Richmond Hill mansion was moved 600 feet to the east
- 1987 Richmond Hill was purchased by the Education Center, Inc., a Greensboro firm that planned to rehabilitate the mansion
- 1988 The Education Center purchased 40 additional, adjoining acres that were once part of the original Richmond Hill estate
- 1989 Richmond Hill opened as an elegant inn and conference center in September of 1989

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